Fit "TripleX" Regd - and be safe

1/6

The Sketch

OTARD
Cognac BRANDY
Famous since 1795

ROSS'S BELFAST
GINGER ALE · SODA WATER · TONIC WATER · GRAPE FRUIT · LIME JUICE CORDIAL · LEMONADE
For future "Good Luck."

The Aristocrat of Liqueurs
Drambuie
THE DRAMBUIE LIQUEUR CO. LTD., 12, YORK PLACE, EDINBURGH

Stop that COLD with VAPEX
V193

By Appointment
Cerebos
Salt perfection

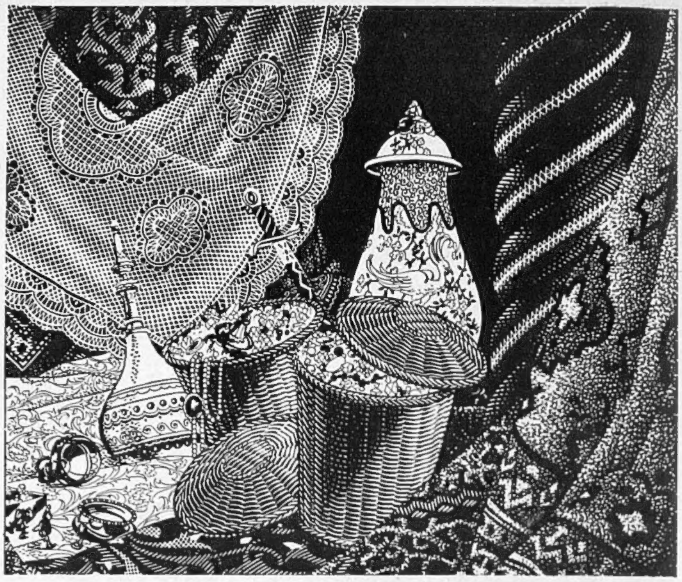
ALL CLASSES OF INSURANCE TRANSACTED
CAR & GENERAL INSURANCE CORPORATION, LTD.
83, PALL MALL, LONDON, S.W.1.

An overcoat should give more than harbourage from the weather. There should be a pleasurable feeling of warmth and ease, that can be renewed each day and gratefully revived winter after winter. But good materials and good tailoring must first go to the making, as we very well know.

AUSTIN REED

OF REGENT STREET

LONDON AND PRINCIPAL CITIES · LONDON TELEPHONE: REGENT 6789



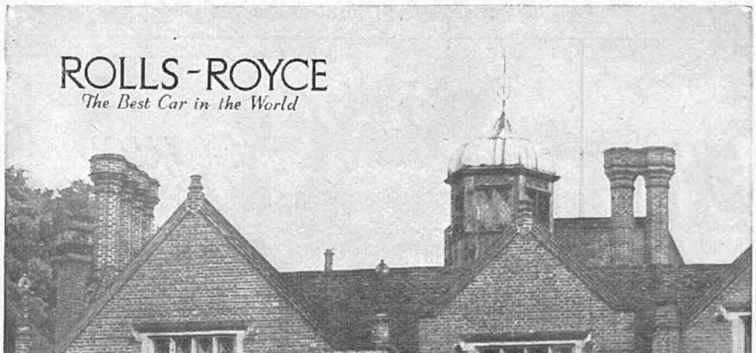
SOMETHING RICH AND RARE . . .

ISN'T that the definition of the ideal Christmas gift? And how thoroughly the gift of a Hoover to a woman fulfils it. For the Hoover is a gift rich in the freedom it confers from dusty house-cleaning and endless drudgery. Rare — Alas! Since as fast as seen it is snapped up like all good things in these days of shortages. This however is a situation we are doing our utmost to amend. As fast as we can manufacture Hoover cleaners they are being delivered to Hoover dealers. *Your* chance will come to *'Give her a Hoover and give her the best'!*

PRE-WAR PRICES!

Model 262	£17.5.0
Purchase Tax	£4.6.3
Cleaning Kit	£3.3.0
Purchase Tax	15.9

The **HOOVER** Reg. Trade Mark



ROLLS-ROYCE LTD., CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1. MAYFAIR 6201

By Appointment to H.M. King George VI

James Buchanan & Co. Ltd. Scotch Whisky Distillers

"BLACK & WHITE"

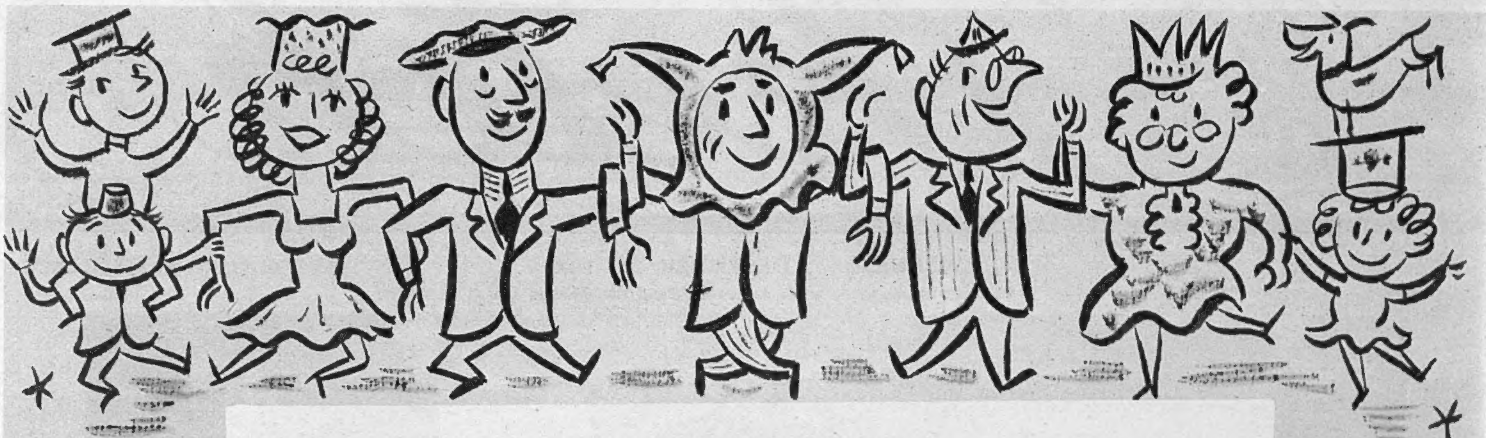
SCOTCH WHISKY

The Sketch

No. 2668—Vol. CCV. WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1946 ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE.

Postage: Inland 2d. Canada & Newfoundland 1d. Foreign 1½d.

CHRISTMAS IN BALI—NO ICE, NO SNOW, NO COLD.



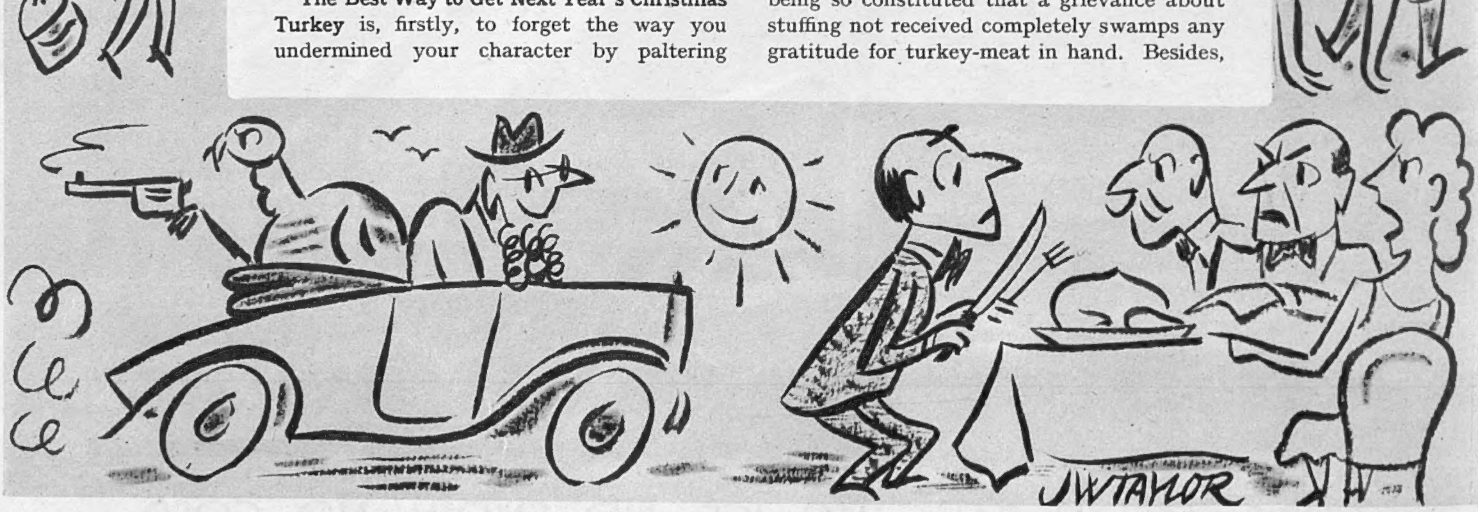
MOTLEY NOTES By ALAN KEMP

GOODWILL and good cheer are, by general consent, high among the numerous Christmas virtues. Owing to a certain lack of goodwill during recent years, there is now a regrettable shortage of good cheer. All the more reason to pile on the goodwill this December, so as to even things up. We all ought to try to help each other, forgetful of self. That is what I am about to do. I am going to give you a lot of good, free advice. I am aware that this anti-social practice does not generally add to the volume, or *quantum*, of goodwill among men—still less, I fear, among women. I cannot help that. I must do my duty, even if it spoils your Christmas Day. You want the best advice? I have it. It is the fruit of a lifetime's experience of Christmases in many places and circumstances, together with much intensive reflection on human nature, politics, economics and other grim realities. So just take my tip, remembering that you are getting it extraordinarily cheap compared with what any solicitor or doctor would charge you for it.

If You Want to be a Little Ray of Sunshine—which is what you *ought* to want to be in the home circle at Yuletide, however painful it may be to others—the recipe is quite simple: Don't read the news. Still less listen to the news. Think of happy, other-worldly things, such as one of these much-advertised trips to the moon. There are not many rays of sunshine up there, I believe, or sometimes too many; but, anyhow, there are no Peace Conferences or United Nations. And so to food.

The Best Way to Get Next Year's Christmas Turkey is, firstly, to forget the way you undermined your character by paltering and chaffering with masked men and sinister figures from the Black Market to get this year's turkey. It only gets you into low company and undermines the character. Next July when you see, hanging up in a shop, a nice, fat one which takes your fancy, put on a pair of dark glasses and a false beard, go boldly in and engage the poulterer in light conversation. Taking him unawares when he is convulsed with laughter at your latest one about the commercial traveller and the landlady, clap over his mouth a bath towel soaked in chloroform. If, as is highly probable, you have some old scores to settle with him, rattle his head on his own marble slab for a few minutes, or choke him with sawdust from his own floor, just to keep him in the right frame of mind. Remove turkey from hook with a smart, soldierly motion, wrap (please bring own paper), place in string bag, and dart off in powerful waiting car, changing number-plate on way home. If followed, shoot it out. No trouble at all. And even if it *is* a slight trouble—the turkey will, for instance, fill up your refrigerator for months—it is either that or no turkey. And what is Christmas without turkey? Usually, it is Christmas with pork—and with a terrible aftermath.

The Best Way to Carve This Year's Turkey is, before you begin, to get firmly fixed in your mind one or two simple but important points. First of all, *don't forget the stuffing.* Many carvers, flushed with triumph at having dislodged certain ragged, edible portions from the exterior, overlook the interior—an oversight which inevitably casts a shadow over the company, human nature being so constituted that a grievance about stuffing not received completely swamps any gratitude for turkey-meat in hand. Besides,



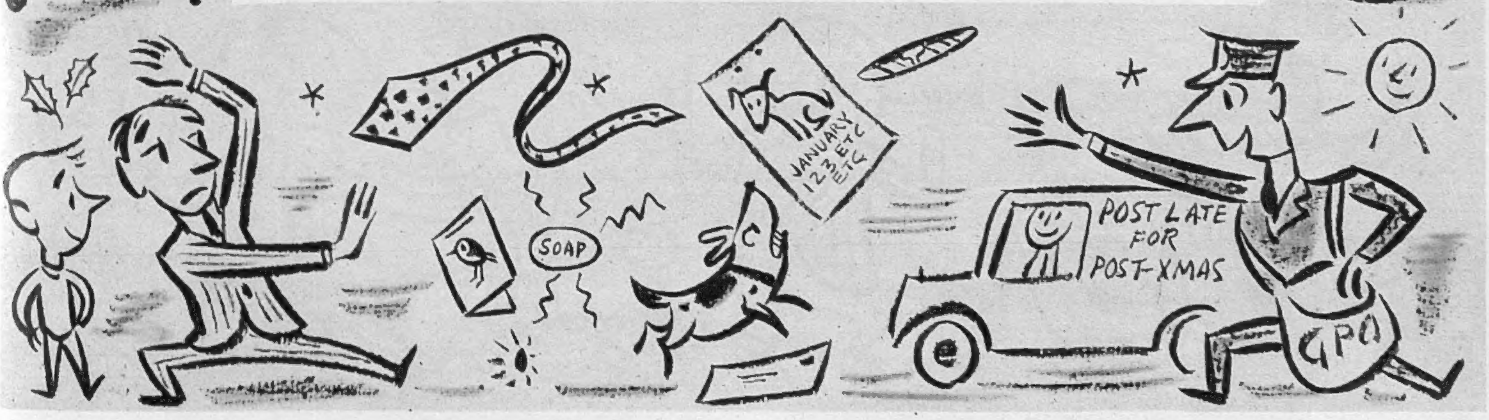
stuffing has this great advantage, that it is comparatively easy to carve; indeed, you can carve it with a blunt spoon, which is a vastly superior implement to a blunt knife. As for the rest of the bird—well, fortunately, a turkey is one of the few table birds with an ample bosom, the result, justly enough, of constantly puffing itself out in an arrogant manner. Provided that neither the bird nor the knife is too antique, you ought to be able to do fairly well with the breast, and that is really all that matters in carving a turkey. You think I have forgotten the legs and the wings? Far from it! It is impossible to forget the legs and the wings, seeing that they are going to haunt us, in many spectral forms, long after Christmas is all forgotten and forgiven. My advice about the legs and the wings is to let them severely alone; otherwise a season of rejoicing is likely to be turned into a Black Wednesday. Let somebody deal with the legs and the wings in the kitchen—your cook, if any, your wife, if none (that is a little obscure, but I dare say you can work it out). Cooks and wives have a morbid, sadistic streak which delights in doing gruesome things to the legs and wings of a turkey. Leave it to them; wash your hands of it—and, believe me, they would need a great deal of washing once you allowed yourself to get mixed up in the leg-and-wing *fracas.*

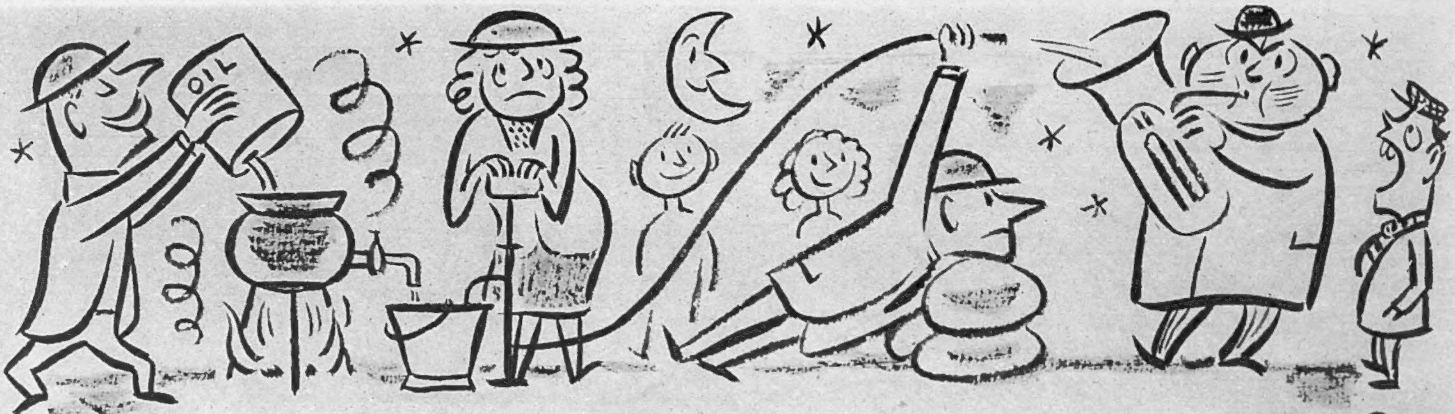
The Best Way to Make a Christmas Pudding can be sub-divided into two methods, both of which I can recommend, leaving you to make your own choice:

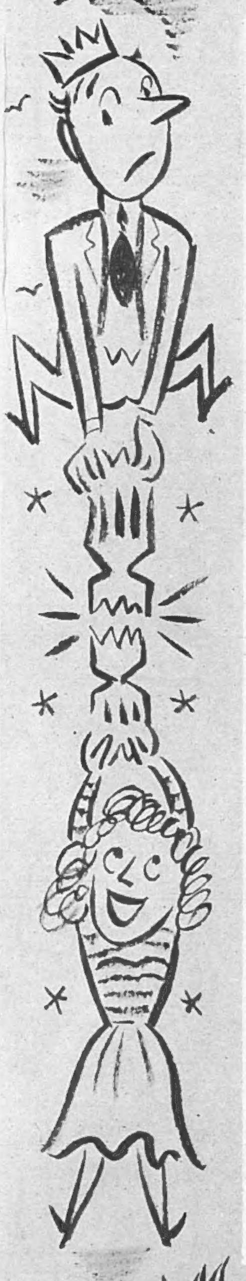
(1) Take 1 lb. finest white flour, 1½ lb. bread-crumbs, 1½ lb. minced and shredded suet, 1 doz. new-laid eggs, ½ lb. best creamery butter, ½ bott. brandy, 2 lb. fine white cane sugar, and an assortment of apples, raisins, nutmeg, sultanas, mixed candied peel, cloves, mace, currants, cinnamon, dates, and figs. Bung the whole lot together in one glorious, sticky mash, and stir well, calling in family and friends every now and then to have a go. Place in a well-buttered pudding basin and boil for 9 hours. Then wake up and scream.

(2) Take half-a-dozen old buttons (if your wife hasn't pinched them all), a handful of cupro-nickel sixpences, and a mixed lot of small ironmongery, such as miniature shoes, bells and rings, with a sprinkling of old nails. Bind together with finely-ground dried lentils, watered into a paste, with a dash of British sherry, Scotch port, Welsh brandy, or just plain logjuice. Add a few scoopfuls of off-points semolina, or any other Cereal Filler which cannot be palmed off on the brute creation. Sweeten with a few blobs of saccharin, if any, and mix in some dried milk and dried eggs, if any, and season with a few dried salt tears. If you can raise one or two sultanas or currants, that will give a real tone to the thing and will nip in the bud any tendency to complaint or criticism. If these luxuries are unobtainable, get some of those nice dried fruits which look as if they had just been recovered from Tutankhamen's Tomb; cut them up and just *pretend*—everybody will enter into the spirit of the game. Boil as long as you like: or don't boil at all—it really doesn't matter. Serve after the turkey, with Irish rum sauce; or don't serve at all—it really doesn't matter.

The Best Way to Choose Forgotten Christmas Presents is, as it were, to shuffle and deal. I am thinking of the post-Christmas post, which will almost certainly bring a calendar, a doll's handkerchief, or a cake of hectic-pink soap from some second-cousin whom, by God's mercy, you have not seen for ten years, or from some childhood's friend whom you always loathed at school. There is invariably some social pest like that who bobs







up just when you are congratulating yourself that you have thought of everybody. Something must be done—but what? It isn't that you grudge this killjoy a calendar, a handkerchief, or a cake of soap in return; that, as I have indicated, can easily be arranged by a rapid shuffle among the haberdashery from other second-cousins and old school friends. The aspect I *can't* help you with is the fact that you completely overlooked this thicker-than-water kith and kin or this faithful, affectionate childhood's playmate. Believe me, you can't explain it away. You must either own up and blot your copy-book for ever, or resort to the most shameless, unscrupulous mendacity. What about it? I refuse to advise. I know what *I* do in these painful circumstances, but I decline to say more—except that I have sometimes been almost awestruck by the fertility of my own imagination.

The Best Way to Deal with Carol Singers is to employ mediæval methods. For with the return of what is facetiously called peace, together with a certain increase in man-power and brat-power, this social menace is likely, I fear, to grow. Even last Christmas there was—in this desirable residential neighbourhood, anyhow—so much vocal music in all directions, in so many different keys and with such intricate *tempi*, that it might almost have been a non-stop opera by some distinguished modern composer. Far too many people are weak and unprincipled in this matter. They scatter *largesse* hastily, merely to put themselves and the performers out of their misery. This is simply following the line of least resistance, yielding to blackmail, and encouraging juvenile delinquency. There used to be some good old country customs which were not so weak-kneed—for instance, you could heat up the pennies before scattering them, and at least had the satisfaction of inflicting a little pain in return for all that you had suffered yourself. Back in the Middle Ages they did even better—they developed a high degree of skill in pouring boiling oil and bubbling lead on unwelcome visitors. That is the method which I recommend, and if there is a band, it will be found a very amusing sport to aim a stream of boiling oil at the euphonium—an instrument which produces novel and interesting harmonics when filled with this liquid. If oil and lead are in short supply, plain scalding water, such as is used for carolling cats, will have to do. Unless, of course, Mr. Shinwell rations it.

The Best Way to be the Life and Soul of the Party is to get rid of your inhibitions. There are a few simple things which are within everybody's power and which will add to the happiness of one and all. Thus, when pulling a cracker, make a sudden tug at it and fall over backwards. This is a very popular number, especially if you concuss yourself and have to be removed on a shutter. If wearing a false nose, turn it round every now and then to the back of your head. The effect is most striking and earns one the reputation of an irrepressible wit. When the turkey comes in, make a gobbling noise by agitating your uvula rapidly on your œsophagus (it needs practice). Everybody will think you are drunk on the Highland Burgundy, or taken ill, but what matters that at the festive season? If there is any mistletoe, get under it and keep on saying something smart and original, like "Now then, girls, now 's your chance!"—it 's a scream every time. If you can get hold of a tin trumpet, blow it in everybody's ear when they aren't expecting it—people love it. It is these little, nameless, unremembered acts of gaiety and good-fellowship which make one a social success and add so much to the Christmas spirit of comfort and joy.

THE GOURMET'S CHRISTMAS

BY SANDA CANTACUZINO.

CHRISTMAS STOCKING.

BOULES AU CACAO (Cocoa Balls).

Take two tablespoonfuls of golden syrup ; stir in 4 oz. cocoa, add 2 oz. creamed margarine, and roll small balls of the mixture in cocoa.

BONBONS AUX AMANDES (Almond Kisses).

Pass through the mincer 3 oz. nuts or almonds. Melt 3 oz. sugar and mix in quickly the nuts or almonds. Let cool, and when cold enough to touch, make into small balls and roll them in sugar.

PÂTÉS AU CHOCOLAT (Mock Halva).

Bring to the boil ¾ cupful of golden syrup ; remove from the fire and stir in 4 oz. cocoa, 4 oz. minced nuts and the peel of half an orange passed through the mincer. Mix well, and fill a greased mould about ½ in. high. Beat well down and leave for 24 hours in a cold place ; turn out, cut into squares, wrap each in grease-proof paper and fill small boxes.

LUNCH.

TARTELETTES DUCHESSE (Palace Pastry).

Make a pastry with 8 oz. flour and 2 oz. lard. Roll out and line individual tartlet tins. Bake in a hot oven until golden brown. Fry 1 lb. chopped mushrooms, add 2 level tablespoonfuls of flour and two cups of meat stock. Stir well, and when thick add the contents of one jar of liver pâté cut into thin slices. Fill the tartlets with the cream and heat for five minutes in the oven. A poached egg on top of each tartlet is an improvement.

DINDE FARCIE (Stuffed Turkey).

Take 1 lb. chestnuts and make a cut in each one. Cover them with cold water and bring to the boil, then peel quickly and boil the chestnuts again in meat stock until soft. Mash them well and mix them with 2 oz. creamed margarine and ½ lb. sausage meat, salt, pepper and reconstituted egg. Stuff the turkey with the mixture. Cover the breast with rashers of bacon and put in a roasting tin with 3-4 tablespoonfuls of water. Melt separately a little lard or suet and baste the turkey frequently with this. Don't baste during the last half hour ; allow 15 minutes per lb. in a hot oven. Serve with a purée of mashed haricot beans mixed with fried onions.

POUDING GRANDE BRETAGNE (Christmas Pudding).

Rub 4 oz. suet in 3 oz. flour ; add 3 oz. bread-crumbs, 1 teaspoonful mixed spices, 1 teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda and 4 oz. sugar. Mix well, then add 2 oz. currants, 2 oz. sultanas and 2 oz. raisins. Reconstitute two eggs with one cupful of milk and stir in one tablespoonful of warm golden syrup. Fill a buttered pudding basin with the mixture, tie a cloth on top and steam in a very cool oven or on a very low fire for 5-8 hours.

TEA.

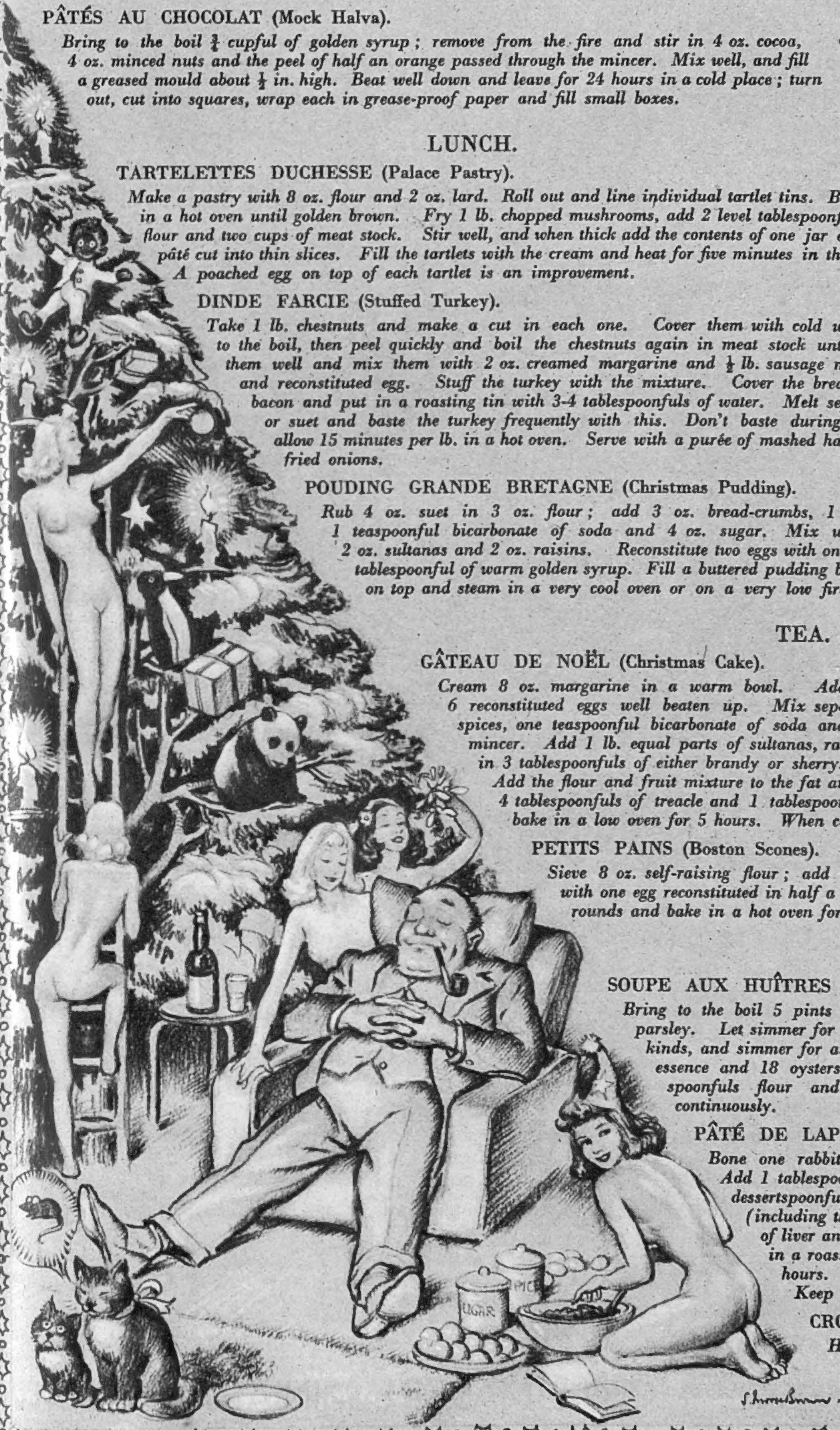
GÂTEAU DE NOËL (Christmas Cake).

Cream 8 oz. margarine in a warm bowl. Add 8 oz. brown sugar and, little by little, 6 reconstituted eggs well beaten up. Mix separately 1 lb. flour with 2 teaspoonfuls mixed spices, one teaspoonful bicarbonate of soda and the peel of one orange passed through the mincer. Add 1 lb. equal parts of sultanas, raisins, and currants previously soaked for 1 hour in 3 tablespoonfuls of either brandy or sherry.

Add the flour and fruit mixture to the fat and finally mix in 1 gill of warm milk mixed with 4 tablespoonfuls of treacle and 1 tablespoonful of strong coffee. Fill a greased cake tin and bake in a low oven for 5 hours. When cold, cover with almond paste and icing.

PETITS PAINS (Boston Scones).

Sieve 8 oz. self-raising flour ; add ½ teaspoonful of salt. Rub in 2 oz. lard and mix well with one egg reconstituted in half a pint of milk. Roll out to the thickness of ½ in. Cut into rounds and bake in a hot oven for 10-15 minutes.



DINNER.

SOUPE AUX HUÎTRES (Oyster Soup).

Bring to the boil 5 pints of water with 2 carrots, 2 onions, 1 celery heart and a little parsley. Let simmer for one hour, then add 1 lb. of fish, if possible two or three different kinds, and simmer for another 30 minutes. Strain, and add 1 teaspoonful of anchovy essence and 18 oysters ; bring to the boil. Melt 2 oz. margarine, stir in 2 tablespoonfuls flour and pour the soup over slowly, stirring the remaining stock continuously.

PÂTÉ DE LAPIN (Rabbit Pâté).

Bone one rabbit, then pass all the meat through the mincer with one onion. Add 1 tablespoonful of chopped herbs, salt, pepper, 1 reconstituted egg and one dessertspoonful of white wine. Line a terrine with bacon. Cut 1 lb. of liver (including the rabbit's) into thin slices, and fill the terrine with alternate layers of liver and farce. Cover with bacon. Put a lid on top. Stand the terrine in a roasting tin filled with boiling water and leave in a low oven for two hours. When ready, remove the lid and put a 2-lb. weight on the pâté. Keep in a cool place for 24 hours. Turn out before serving.

CROÛTONS ROSE (Creamed Savoury).

Have ready half a cupful of thick white sauce ; mix in half a cupful of minced tongue, spam, or ham. Cut round pieces of bread, dip them in melted fat, spread the cream over them, sprinkle with grated cheese and leave in a hot oven until the bread is crisp.

DRAWING BY S. MORSE-BROWN.

Christmas is no glittering set-piece limited to human families. It extends its all-encircling tentacles to almost every form of existence, even that of the models who live their own gay life in which *homo sapiens* merely plays the part of creator. Here are photographs of the model family hearth, complete with a solitary wait tromboning outside to the moon and a distant lighted window; indoors Papa toils upstairs to fill up the stockings, to Mamma's admonitory "S . . sh!" Thwarted little boy screams while elder brother plays with his engine; and the baby waking up, finds a splendid glass elephant in the life-size stocking hanging on his cot.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY E. HEIMANN, F.R.P.S., F.I.B.P.

CHRISTMAS IN MINIATURE: FESTIVE

SEASON WITH A MODEL FAMILY.

HOW WE

Being an account of an
now facing the upper classes in
some comments on their food,

By MARGHANITA LASKI.

TO attempt any summing up of the results of the lengthy survey which I have now concluded would be to waste far too much time and space on generalisations, which, after all, prove nothing.

The following findings, conveniently classified, must, therefore, stand on their own merits as the most up-to-date and authentic statistics available.

★

SOME UPPER-CLASS BUDGETS.

Case 1

The Honourable Melonia A. works in a motor-car showroom, and is wholly dependent on her earnings, apart from her rent, which is paid from a source beyond the scope of this survey. Her Mayfair flat comprises bed-sitting-room and bathroom, but has no facilities for cooking; in any case, the Honourable Melonia A. doesn't know how to do any.

Total earned income : £3 a week.

Expenditure :	*£*	*s.*	*d.*
Fares to and from work (taxis)	1	10	0
Lunches	1	10	0
Telephone account	1	10	0
Hairdressing, facials, etc.	1	10	0
Drink, cosmetics	1	10	0
Newspapers	0	0	6
	7	10	6

Deficit : £4 10s. 6*d.* per week.

Comment : It is obvious that the Honourable Melonia A. must depend for her dinners on the generosity of others.

Case 2

Mr. B. C. is 35, employed by the British Broadcasting Corporation at a salary of £600 p.a. He has been trying to find a rich wife since he came down from Oxford, but clearly realises that this ambition demands a certain initial outlay. He hopes eventually to be able to repay his creditors, but it now seems likely that they may foreclose on him before he achieves his object.

Total earned income (never mind about Income Tax) : £12 per week.

Expenditure :	*£*	*s.*	*d.*
Rent	5	0	0
Clothes, manicures, etc.	5	0	0
Drink, cigarettes, etchings	5	0	0
Entertaining 3 prospective wives per week	30	0	0
	45	0	0

Deficit : £33 per week.

Comment : The seemingly high expenditure on the fourth item is more than justified when viewed in its proper perspective as Capital Equipment.

Case 3

Viscount D. E. is 39, married, two children. He is in the Guards. He has no income beyond his Captain's pay which, with allowances, amounts to some £500 p.a. His wife tends to be extravagant. His home is inherited, so he pays no rent, and his land is farmed, but shows no profit.

Total earned income : £500 p.a.

Annual expenditure :	*£*	*s.*	*d.*
Rates			
Land Tax			
Schedule A assessment	1500	0	3
Insurance			
Queen Anne's Bounty			
Food	250	0	0
Wife's clothes	250	0	0
Son's education (prep. school)	250	0	0
Daughter's nanny	250	0	0
Own mess bills	50	0	0
	2550	0	3

Annual deficit : £2050 0s. 3*d.*

Comment : Viscount D. E. is not getting enough to drink.

★

LIVING CONDITIONS.

With reference to our chapter on living conditions in Mayfair, a detailed survey was conducted by a trained investigator who called on the Honourable Melonia A. (*see Some Upper-Class Budgets, Case* 1) at 11.15 a.m. on a Sunday. Her conclusions are summarised below :

The bed-sitting occupied by the Honourable Melonia A. is in a large, comparatively modern block. One lift serves fifty flatlets and is frequently, as on the day our investigator called, out of order. Swing-doors and closed windows effectively prevent any fresh air entering the halls and stairways, and the atmosphere is further vitiated by excessive central-heating; electric lights burn day and night.

Our investigator had no inconsiderable difficulty in entering the flatlet in question; this was explained by the Honourable Melonia A. by the fact that she was having her sleep out. The flatlet was in a state of utter confusion. The Honourable Melonia A. is clearly an incompetent manager, but explained that she had been entertaining a dozen friends the evening before; as the measurements of the bed-sitting-room do not exceed 12 feet by 8 feet, the amount of cubic space occupied by each guest was clearly, according to L.C.C. requirements, insufficient.

The outlet from this flatlet is extremely sombre, facing, as it does, the encaustic-tiling back-wall of a similar block a few feet away. Kitchen smells constantly rise up

LIVE NOW!

investigation of the difficulties keeping up appearances, with habits, and living conditions.

the shaft thus formed, and in addition, a power-plant of indeterminate purpose clanks from the basement both day and night. To this must be added the noises of the lift (when in working order), voices, radios and bath-water.

The Honourable Melonia A. professed herself content with these conditions and is not, indeed, a type one could honestly recommend for rehousing. The flatlet was sufficiently but drably furnished by the management, and the only indications of personal taste that could be seen were a midget radio tuned to the Light Programme, copies of *Vogue* and the *Sunday Graphic*, and a novel entitled *Forever Amber*.

Our investigator recommends that fewer built-in clothing-closets might be of considerable value to this class of tenant, since the temptation to fill those of the size at present available must be enormous.

★

SOME DIETETIC HABITS OF THE UPPER CLASSES.

Case 1

The Marchioness of F., Society Woman.

Breakfast :
Glass of orange-juice contributed by grandchildren.
Lunch :
Smoked salmon sandwich.
Gin-and-lime.
Tea :
Cup of coffee.
Dinner :
Salad.
Black coffee.

Analysis : This diet is almost wholly deficient in protein.

Case 2

Lady Marmelita G. Employed in phoney antique-shop.

Breakfast :
One slice bacon.
Bread and butter, occasionally marmalade.
Cup of tea.
Lunch :
Meat pie.
Cup of tea.
Tea :
Cup of tea.
Dinner :
Baked beans on toast.
Cup of tea.

Analysis : This diet is almost wholly deficient in vitamins.

Case 3

Sir H. I-J. Financier.

Breakfast :
Grapefruit.
Porridge with cream and sugar.
Grilled herring.
Toast and butter.
Marmalade.
Coffee.
Lunch :
Tomato soup with cream.
Grilled steak, onions, potatoes, green vegetable.
Apple-pie and cream.
Tea :
Egg sandwiches.
2 cream cakes.
Cup of tea.
Dinner :
Beetroot soup with whipped sour cream.
Roast pheasant, potatoes, green vegetable.
Mushrooms on toast.
Supper :
Iced melon.
Lobster thermidor.
Peaches and cream.

(*Q:* How does Sir H. I-J. get all this cream ?
A : Like so many business men, he has bought a dairy-farm.)

Analysis : This diet is grossly redundant in practically everything.

★

TIME AND MOTION SURVEY.

It is generally agreed that unconscious slacking, as opposed to deliberate sabotage, is responsible for by far the greatest waste of outlay. Our Class Observer observed Miss K.ff. between the hours of 8 p.m. and midnight, when her time presumably belonged to young Lord L.M., who was paying for her evening. Report B.76549 follows :

8-8.30 p.m.
Lord L.M. waiting while Miss K.ff. dresses.

8.45-9 p.m.
Miss K.ff. in cloakroom of restaurant repairing her toilet.

9.15-9.29 p.m.
Miss K.ff. talking to friends at adjacent table.

9.50-9.54 p.m.
Miss K.ff. making eyes at American officer.

10-10.10 p.m.
Miss K.ff. takes out compact, repowders face, applies lipstick and combs lashes.

10.33-10.42 p.m.
Miss K.ff. dances with old friend from other side of the room.

11-11.15 p.m.
Miss K.ff., back in cloakroom, compares notes with girl-friend.

11.17-11.30 p.m.
Miss K.ff. talking to friends in doorway of restaurant while Lord L.M. is sent to look for a taxi.

11.30-midnight.
Miss K.ff. walking home in too bad a temper to do anything at all.

From which it will be observed, by a simple calculation, that out of a total of 4 hours, Miss K.ff. devoted no less than 2 hours 20 minutes to diversions which yielded absolutely no return for Lord L.M.'s outlay.

Reproduced by Courtesy of Contact Publications.

"A MERRY CHRISTMAS, A HAPPY NEW YEAR": FROM THE STARS OF TWO WORLDS.

Some of the stars have vaulted down from the screen again this year; autographed their best photographs with good wishes to "The Sketch" readers. On the left, the transatlantic, on the right the British; all charged with goodwill towards their millions of fans.

A CHRISTMAS THRILL

★

The Fantasy-World of Pantomime

★

By JOHN RUSSELL

MY own first pantomime was at Richmond. I was then four years old, and the theatre had been chosen on the assumption that only at a certain distance from the centre of London was the performance likely to be free from suggestive or deleterious matter. I cannot now gauge if this theory was correct, but I do remember the instantaneous effect of pleasure and astonishment which was given by the first sight of the theatre itself. Jonah inside the Whale was not more surprised by his surroundings, and I had to be jacked up in my seat before I could give my full attention to the spectacle on the stage.

Pantomime is ideally adapted to a child's view of the world: he finds in it everything which is most characteristic of life itself—the same unaccountable changes of fortune, the same indecipherable passions and the same motiveless outbursts of joy and distress; if anything, there are more presents, but they never seem to spread any further. Thus, although I dozed through most of my first pantomime, I found no difficulty in accepting it as a masterpiece of social realism. In fact, for some years afterwards I thought that all plays were pantomimes—an impression which, though once decried as the mark of an inferior intelligence, could now be defended.

Exit the Ironclad Sopranos. Now that there are only two pantomimes in Central London, and not very many elsewhere, children may too easily miss this genial introduction to the theatre. Life has evolved away from pantomime; it cannot be, as it was two generations ago, the great open hearth of a London winter, whose warmth, first glimpsed on playbills in November, blazed on from Christmas till Easter. Other pleasures lie ready to hand; even the Third Programme may acknowledge the intellectual curiosity of Christmas; and perhaps it should be admitted that the pantomimes are not always as good as they were. What Dryden called "the songish part" suffers especially from the decline of those ironclad sopranos whose terrible powers sufficed to shatter the glass in the gallery bar; and even our best-liked comedians must sometimes regret the audiences of 1860, with their tremendous charge of long-hoarded expectation. Of one of these, the *Daily Telegraph* once wrote that they "atoned for their lugubrious externals by developing the very highest capacity for hearty enjoyment and uproarious mirth"; pantomime demands a transformation of this kind, and in the 1850s as many as fifteen theatres were pledged to effect it every evening.

Grown-up persons may still be found, I believe, to submit gladly to the fantasy-world of pantomime, with its atrocious couplets, geographical improvisations, and stock characters whose origin steps back to the first beginnings of our consciousness. Pantomime no longer "epitomises the events and ideas of the moment," as it was once said to do. Politically, it has little scope, because very few of its patrons are interested in politics (as distinct from holding fixed opinions on the subject); and theatrical producers too often think that they can do without jokes about current affairs if they put in enough allusions to themselves and their families. Primary education has made us all too self-conscious to enjoy couplets like this one:

> As for you, you idle apprentice,
> You make me feel *non compos mentis.*

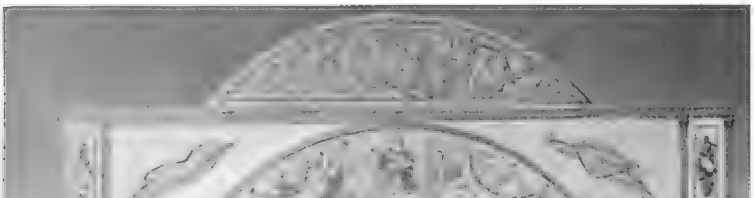
Nor has the contemporary madness of Itma leaked over into Pantomime. Every generation has its own kind of naïvety, and our own is, in many ways, hostile to pantomime. But one supreme eccentricity remains intact—the transferences of sex, which occur as regularly in pantomime as on the oyster-bed.

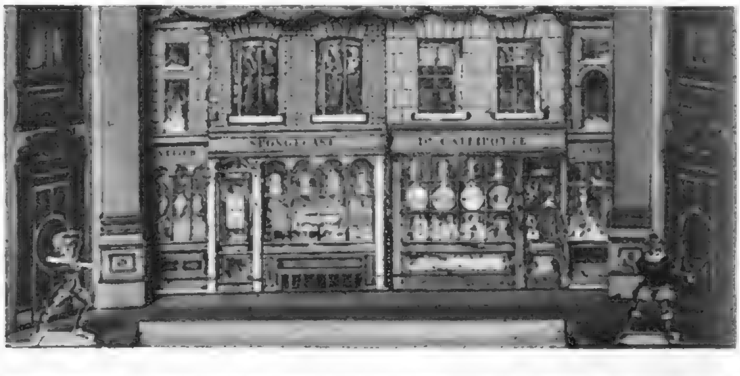
A Sanctified Convention. The convention of the Principal Boy dates historically from 1813, when Mrs. Kemble played Aladdin; and those who have seen such divinities of more recent date as Miss Fay Compton, Miss Binnie Hale and Miss Pat Kirkwood will know how much of the pleasure of pantomime derives from it. Sanctified by its adoption in "Figaro" and "Rosenkavalier," the idea serves to double the enjoyment of male spectators, for whom few performers of their own sex prove sympathetic on the musical stage.

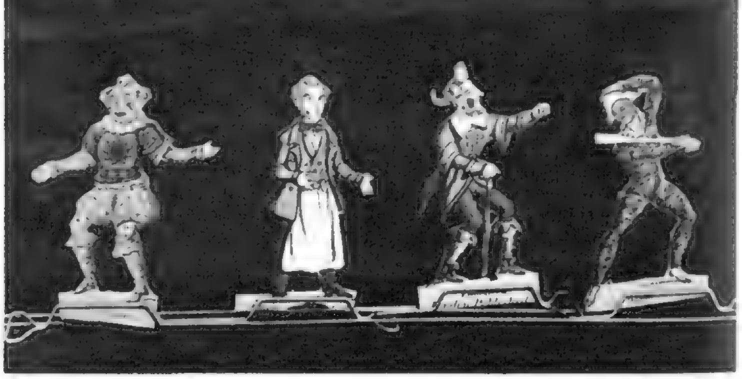
As for the incongruity of the plan, I need only quote the antique gallantry of a colleague who once wrote of a great Principal Boy that "despite her comeliness, she never raises any question of sex. Where she is, there is Fairyland." Mr. A. E. Wilson, from whose encyclopædia "Pantomime Pageant" (Hutchinson; 16s.) I take much of my matter, notes how one of these paragons was once given a silver wreath, purchased by subscription among Chicago bootblacks; and after skimming through some old files of *The Sketch* I can readily conceive the wholehearted devotion of these enthusiasts.

Of course, there was not, in those days, any intensive competition from the creatures of Mr. David Wright's imagination; rather were readers of *The Sketch* regaled with a full-page spread of Pope Leo XIII., or of Mr. George Meredith, or of the Australian Cabinet. Eminent Principal Boys strayed on to the Society pages; Miss Minnie Jeffs, in her white fur jerkin and lace-up boots, disputed with P. F. Warner's M.C.C. team for the applause of the public; and Melba's visit to her birthplace gave place, I am afraid, to the baroque enthralments of Miss Harriet Vernon. Rifle-shooting at Nuneham Harcourt, and Mr. Beerbohm's cartoon of Mr. Shaw, and Dr. Mandell Creighton's Albanian beard—all were swept away at pantomime time.

Dramatic critics of the time also gave way to the excitement, and I noticed one, who, after summarising the plot of Bluebeard, added a phrase more suited to one of Mr. Douglas Byng's travesties: "Cerulean







With proscenium, footlights, curtain, movable scenes, orchestra, and full cast cut out of the "Juvenile Drama, Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured" sheets pasted on cardboard, Victorian children staged their miniature pantomimes. The toy theatre above, left, by Webb, c. 1820, shows the street scene from "Harlequin Jack and the Beanstalk." Columbine, Pantaloon, Harlequin and Clown stand in their grooves centre. Right: Clown, Cheesemonger, Pantaloon and Harlequin (l. to r.), traditional pantomime characters, are gripped in the wires upon which they are pulled across the miniature stage in a groove.

hirsute appendage?" he wrote. "Ugh! Shudderful idea!" A generation earlier, a colleague had invented the word "legmania" to describe the feats of contortionism with which such virtuosi as Fred Vokes enlivened "Humpty Dumpty." "If there was anything funnier than Mr. Vokes' split dance," he wrote, "it was his step dance, Lancashire clogs, Cornish reels, transatlantic walk-rounds, cellar flaps and breakdowns, college horn-pipes and Irish jigs."

Showers of Peel and Pips.

Robust pleasures such as Mr. Vokes' legmania were enjoyed by audiences of all kinds. At the Royal Victoria (which later assumed a more dignified rôle in theatrical history by becoming the Old Vic), there gathered "the vilest and lowest in London, the scum of Lambeth." This vast, greasy, coatless mob conducted itself with fearful violence. Tremendous fighting would break out in pit and gallery; fish would be cooked and eaten during the performance, nut-crackers furnished a continual rattle of small-arms fire, and from the orange-eating gallery a shower of peel and pips would constantly descend on the heads of those below. Even at Drury Lane the overture was usually drowned by extempore choruses from pit and gallery.

When the performance finally began, it was liable to go on for a very long time. Dickens once said of a pantomime at the Britannia that "before it was over I felt as if I had been travelling for six weeks—going to India, say, by the Overland Mail." But, for the audience, it could not be too long; and for many of them its scenes related forcibly to the daily round of existence. The thwarted policeman, for instance, released many hundreds of wishful fantasies throughout the house.

The roughnesses of the 1860s, with their beer-swilling, pip-flicking audience, seem to have been tamed after only a very few years, and by 1880 it was remarked that "Parsifal" itself could hardly have a more silently attentive audience. And now, in Central London at least, we have reached a point at which pantomime is received exactly as if it were ordinary spectacular revue. Perhaps one reason for this is that there are now no overwhelming personalities who reserve their best efforts for the Christmas season. The gifts of our best clowns are dissipated throughout the year in miscellaneous engagements, and it is curious to remember that, till about 1875, music-hall artists were little seen in pantomime; the tradition of impromptu buffoonery was still respected, and only towards 1880 did the last relics of the plain-hearted poetry of earlier pantomimes begin to be forgotten. The Harlequinade itself began to be squeezed out, in the interests of a more extravagant spectacle; but pantomime still had one of its greatest figures in reserve.

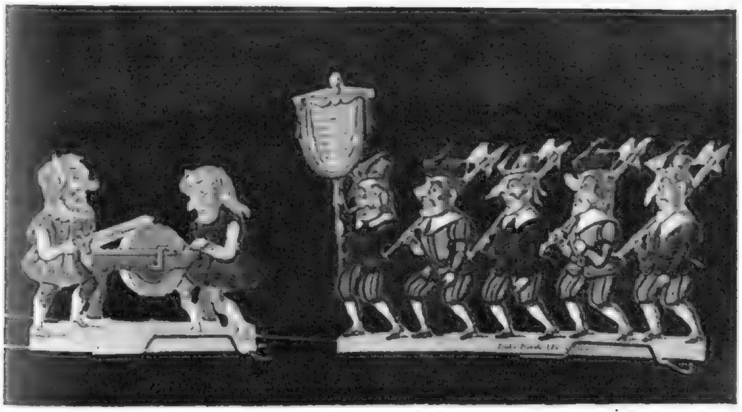
A Giant of Pantomime.

Dan Leno has been preserved for us only through the medium of an ancient gramophone record. As with records of Patti or Sarah Bernhardt, this gives only a deceptive and insubstantial idea of the prodigious artist who made it. In his volume of memoirs, "Left Hand, Right Hand," Sir Osbert Sitwell has a wonderful account of his first pantomime at Drury Lane. In this, Dan Leno appeared as the Beautiful Duchess. "Every gesture," Sir Osbert says, "every turn of the hand, the dress, the wig, above all, the make-up, the air of tremulous precision with which he sat down to the harp, the winsome, nervous flicker of those mournful eyes, the incised lines round the mouth . . . the often melancholy accents of the voice, all went to build up a character which remains unforgettable. And then, on top of all this detail, he brought to bear upon his audience the power of that irresistible comic force . . . until the roof echoed as a great wind of laughter swept and swept again the heads stretching before him into the darkness as a wind passes over a cornfield. . . ." It is these great artists, with their often harrowing background of suffering and delusion, who made the pantomime into an original form of theatrical art.

As has happened with many other good things, persons of superior taste only began to appreciate pantomime at a period when it was already in decline. When, for instance, Arthur Collins took over Drury Lane in 1897, his first production, "Babes in the Wood," was welcomed by *The Times* as a new kind of pantomime, more akin to musical comedy than to its homely forbears. But Mr. Shaw, then at the height of his powers as a dramatic critic, most passionately resented an evening so remote from his own preferred style of play. Even Christmas itself was repugnant to him. "It is an indecent subject," he began, "a cruel, gluttonous subject; a drunken, disorderly subject; a wasteful, disastrous subject; a wicked, cadging, lying, filthy, blasphemous and demoralising subject." Mr. Shaw found that even Dan Leno suffered from poverty of comic material which, though it would come as no surprise in 1946, does rather astonish those of us who had regarded the theatre of fifty years ago as a fount of unsurpassable fun. Mr. Shaw also denounced the whole principle by which pantomime abused "the Christmas toleration of dullness, senselessness, vulgarity and extravagance to a degree utterly incredible to people who have never been inside a theatre." "It is a glittering, noisy void," he continued, "horribly wearisome and enervating." Not that there was not a good deal of talent in the performance; but, then as now, "every stroke that is at all delicate, or rare, or precious, is multiplied, and repeated, and obtruded, usually on the limbs of some desolatingly incompetent young woman, until its value is heavily discounted."

Plea for a Revival.

Without wishing, or indeed, presuming, to rival Mr. Shaw in his power of invective, I think that much of his tirade still holds good. And there is no excuse, at Christmas-time. Children make a good audience, but a critical one. Their senses have not been debauched by years of attendance at musical comedy, and their response is not guided by passing fashion. Mr. Robert Nesbitt has introduced a Harlequinade into his "Night and the Laughter," and very pretty it is, though the comic part could do with a little more attention. Will not some producer of Mr. Nesbitt's class (if any others exist) revive the pantomime as it was in 1860, and leave the spectacular revues to look after themselves? The comedy and the poetry and the pathos of pantomime have been so dispersed among other branches of the theatre and the cinema that we no longer recognise them when we see them; but they have only to be reassembled, and pantomime will be itself again.



Left: The Demons grinding the Sword of Sharpness with which Jack will kill his Giant. Right: The Duke of Cornwall's soldiers; all ready to gather together for the final Harlequinade of horse-play and dancing. The toy theatre never told a nursery story straight; the plot was embroidered with fanciful inventiveness and fresh incidents. Right: The Transformation scene marked the turn of the pantomime—its crisis. The Fairy Queen arrived at this crisis and put everything right; rescued the lovely Heroine; turned her and the hero into Harlequin and Columbine; villain into Clown; his stooge into Pantaloon.

Illustrations reproduced by Courtesy of Benjamin Pollock, Limited.

Between

Do not send me into the hall, Herbert,
   I beg you with my last breath.
For one thing, I cannot act at all, Herbert,
   For another, I shall freeze to death.

I repeat, it is a point of fact, Herbert,
   Ask Edward here—no, Herbert, *don't*!
I cannot act, I WILL not act, Herbert!
   I won't, I won't, I won't, I won't, I won't!

You pay me three times. I've got a natural
   Another round?
(We arrange at the end no one shall lose
   More than a pound.)

Mildred, I wonder if by *any* chance
   You have Mr. Bun?
(Don't hold your cards so tightly, darling;
   There, that's the one!)

And Rose, would it be correct to suppose
   I could skewer
Out of you Mrs. Bung, who is the wife
   Of the brewer?

Lying limply on the floor
is Lady Cynthia Vavasour,
a perfect symbol of repose
save for the fact that on her nose,
right at the very tip of it,
Lord Goodge has placed a threepenny-bit.
Passive in torso, limb and loin
she struggles to dislodge the coin;
her small retroussé strives and strains,
but there the threepenny-bit remains.
Alas, she lacks, and great her loss is,
her father's aquiline proboscis.

It doesn't matter at all, dear lady,
   Though provoking,
Christmas is undoubtedly the season
   For revoking.

THE PENALTIES

VERSES BY

Ourselves

Darling, you are the most soul-shaking,
joy-making, heart-breaking,
the most beautiful sardine
I have ever seen.
Darling, this is the most intoxicating,
earthquaking, breath-taking,
the most wonderful tin—
this cupboard you 're in.

he Ambassador is writing a novelette
Vith fifteen nouns, no more.
His handsome foreign face is sad;
Slowly his pencil scrapes the pad;
Ever his country's servitor,
His Excellency writes a novelette.

Now, children, are you ready?
John, take that back!
You *must* let Granny shuffle,
She has the sticky pack.
I did *not* cheat, Eric!
Besides, as you know,
Everyone cheats just a little
At Slippery Joe.

This is the way the farmer goes,
Whumpety, whumpety, whee!
Down goes baby bunting,
And up comes baby's tea.

Jane, what *are* you supposed to be?
. I know you mustn't tell me,
darling, please don't stand on your head
t before bed.
Now, then, is there a song called "Upside Down"?
. ? Well, there 's no need to frown
ut it. Jane!
ou look quite insane
that, and it shows your drawers.
you must be down there, stay on all-fours, please
Now, you can't be Trees . . .
u are? But darling, why?
t tell me why?
. . . I see . . . but, my sweet,
ldn't you have waved your hands? Did it have to be your feet?
ll, it was awfully difficult to guess.
Now, Jane, God bless,
l off you go!
. . . no . . . no!

OF CHRISTMAS.

IRGINIA GRAHAM.

TWO ANGLES ON HUNTING.

These pictures painted by Michael Lyne, were on view during his recent Exhibition of Water-colour Drawings of English Hunts and Hunting Scenes at Ackermann's Galleries.

"THE END OF THE DAY." *Reproduced by permission of Lieut.-Colonel C. A. Wigham.*

"The Kestrel cruising over meadow
Watched the hunt gallop on its shadow,
Wee figures, almost at a stand,
Crossing the multi-coloured land."—Masefield's *Reynard the Fox.*

DRAWN BY ANNA ZINKEISEN.

On seeing this dress, the Comtesse de Faille remembered
She was married once. She could not remember the year.
A lot of water has flowed under Battersea Bridge since then,
And none of it has been especially clear.
The Comtesse, who was Miss Spragg before she married,
Was bored by this model. She is often bored.
Nevertheless, the heart she once had, stirred for a brief moment,
She too heard the bells, as faint as a lost chord.

On seeing this dress Miss Mansfield knew she would marry
Someone more beautiful and more fair than a June night.
Although she herself was not particularly pretty or wise,
Everything was going to be quite all right.
By the time the model had turned round, Miss Mansfield
Was at the altar of St. Mark's with a peer,
And everything was radiant and glamorous and lovely,
The bells pealing like thunder in her ear.

On seeing this dress, old Miss Rowford wondered whether
She could copy it on to the back of an envelope
Without anyone seeing, so that her dressmaker in Penge
Could " do " it for her, say, in heliotrope?
Miss Rowford did not think about love or marriage
Because, as anyone can see at a glance,
As far as she was concerned, even the model knew the bells
Only stood a hundred-to-one chance.

VIRGINIA GRAHAM.

"CIRCUS O

FROM THE PAINTING BY STEVEN SPURRIER, A.R.A., R.B.A

CHESTRA."

HIBITED AT THE BAZILL GALLERY, RYDER STREET, S.W.1

"GOOD GRACIOUS ME!"

DRAWN BY BLAMPIED.

"*It's a boy!*"

Visitors to the nursing home.

Christening party.

DIARY OF A DOGSBODY.

In his own fascinating idiom Blampied plays with the theme of the birth and growth of a puppy in human dress and terms. With effortless rhythm of line and gay fertility of invention.

Broken nights.

First birthday.

Father minds the baby.

DRAWINGS BY EDMUND BLAMPIED.

Here's a scene of fairyland in Switzerland at Christmas-time. The ubiquitous Clerk of the Weather has surpassed himself in perfect winter conditions; crisp keen air, snowy mountains, white-dressed trees, and a perfect surface for the ski-runners in addition to a picture of breath-taking beauty.

WE TAKE OFF OUR HAT TO—

THE CLERK OF THE WEATHER, for generally managing to supply a scene like this for the lucky ones.

AND WE APPLAUD

MARY MORRIS, for taking over the part of Peter Pan in its forty-second year, and making him slightly malicious.

The title-rôle of J. M. Barrie's "Peter Pan," which has run in unbroken succession for forty-two years, is inherited this year by MISS MARY MORRIS. She takes the line that Peter was a little more malicious and puckish than most of her predecessors have given him credit for, and is playing him with that end in view.

STRAIGHT FROM THE HORSE'S MOUTH

AIRBORNE'S CHRISTMAS PARTY

THE stable cat, Twitchit, who acts as our postman and general liaison officer, arrived in my box the other day with his usual supercilious smirk considerably enlarged. "Your presence is requested at old Airborne's big spread," he said. "It 's a sort of Christmas-cum-Derby celebration party, and he 's asked all the smartest and fastest in the Racing Calendar. As you can hardly be included in either of those categories, I imagine you are asked as comic guest-artist for the cabaret."

"Thanks," I said; "you 'll be coming, of course?" (I knew that would hurt.)

"Well, probably not," he replied. "I have another engagement where, I happen to know, milk and fish-offal are on the menu——"

"And Christmas carols on the stable wall to follow?" I interjected.

He walked out stiffly, turning at the doorway for a Parthian arrow. "*My* ancestors," he purred, "cultivated an ear for music in the days of the Pharaohs, when yours were busy trying to grow out of their zebra stripes.

"And by the way," he added, "you 'll have to do something about that winter coat of yours. Your fellow-guests will be highly polished; you 'd better get that lad busy with a wisp between now and the party." And he sprang nimbly over the lower half of the stable door.

My appearance certainly did me no credit, for my parsimonious master, in order to save rugs for the pampered yearlings I lead at work every morning, had had me clipped trace high. Added to which, the stable attention devoted to an old "schoolmaster" is never on a par with that accorded his pupils. They, of course, are living on "futures," for each one is confidently expected to be "concerned with the classics" in 18 months' time, though every owner and trainer knows that there can at the most be only five such winners, so why these uppish, over-fed little brutes should get all they do—but there, I digress; for it was the party I was after telling you about.

Some very distinguished visitors from France and Ireland were the guests of honour, and they were immediately noticeable in the crowded "*concours Hippique*" by their well-groomed appearance and the French polish upon their immaculate coats. M. Souverain sports a neat "imperial," while elderly M. Marsyas, though looking half his age, moved with a certain degree of stiffness.

"It is nothing," he assured me; "a little trouble I always have in the winter, when my trainer stops me from galloping my usual 14 miles a week."

Just as I was knocking back my third "ginger and arsenic" and wondering when dinner was going to be announced, I nearly had my glass knocked out of my hoof by a rough-looking customer, who neighed in a brogue as broad as his smile. "Faith, now," said Mr. Bright News, "'tis real sorry I am. The divil himself is at me elbow this day. For wasn't I steppin' off the Irish Boat when one of thim Customs men says to me: 'By the look of thim burn marks on your coat, the acid-squirters have nobbled ye.' 'Bedad,' says I, ''tis no more than a drop of potheen gone the wrong way, an' the boat rolling so as the avenging angel could not hold the scales of justice level.'"

I had heard that the guests were to be restricted to those rated over 8 st. 7 lb. in the Three-Year-Old Free Handicap (all good Two-year-olds are supposed to be in bed and asleep at such an hour), and this I thought very distressing, since, though no philanderer, I am a wholehearted admirer of the fair sex, and this limitation would have put the ratio of males to females at 5—1. However, exceptions had, after all, been made in order to equalise the sexes.

The fact that my dinner partner turned out to be Miss Iona did not exactly make the evening a red-letter one, except in so far as her nose bled most of the way through the meal, throughout which she continually impressed upon me the various races she would have won had it not been for this distressing malady. Finding this rather tedious, I was rash enough to ask her opinion of Steady Aim, who was, I thought, looking particularly soignée, seated upon the off fore of our host.

"Oh, that poor darling; *everyone* raves about her, and I really couldn't wish her more luck." She sighed, adding rather acidly: "Of course, it 's a pity she makes such a perfect *guy* of herself—someone really ought to take her clothes in hand. And then, with all her charm—well, I do think it 's a pity to be *quite* so gushing—I mean, she does rather seem to throw herself at your sex—don't you think?"

I attempted "to hedge" this, by saying that it was really her athletic prowess that interested me.

"Oh, she 's *fast* enough," was Miss Iona's reply, "but she 's never been out since the Oaks, and, of course, some of us were not quite at our best so early in the season."

Our conversation was cut short by the Master of Ceremonies praying silence for our host, who made a short speech paying graceful tribute to our Gallic conquerors, to which M. Caracalla replied in a few modest words, at the conclusion of which he presented to our host on behalf of his owner, M. Boussac, a handsome copy of the Half-bred Stud Book, bound in calf and inscribed with the compliments of the Société d'Encouragement

After this, Father Christmas, bearing a remarkable resemblance to Mr. Weatherby under his flowing beard, was announced as awaiting us at the Christmas-tree, to which we repaired to receive our presents. A certain amount of muttering and discontent was apparent when these turned out to be copies of the Racing Calendar (Races Past, and to Come), autographed by such celebrities as Kettledrum, The Scout, Augur, and Gimcrack!

Games followed, and the lucky winner of "Hunt the Horseshoe" and "Stewards' Bluff" were rewarded with genuine post-dated Ministry of Food cereal coupons. A scrimmaging game, somewhat akin to "Sardines" and called "Tattenham Corner," proved immensely popular, the winning pair being obliged to reward the losers under the mistletoe. Horse-play continued to a late hour, but I had to escort Miss Nelia home about midnight as she had come without a chaperon and, in her efforts to air the little French she knew, was getting into rather deep water with handsome Monsieur l'Amiral. It appeared that she was under the impression that "oui" was the correct thing to say, since he wouldn't take neigh for an answer!

And so to bed, in the old stall.

... and Twitchit the cat sprang nimbly over the lower half of the stable door.

"... an' the boat rolling so as the avenging angel could not hold the scales of justice level."

"... and, of course, some of us were not quite at our best so early in the season."

... the Master of Ceremonies praying silence for our host, who made a short speech paying graceful tribute to our Gallic conquerors.

... and so to bed, in the old stall.

THE CIRCUS CLOWN HAS INFINITE VARIETY.

No one clown is like another clown. To each his own make-up, his own clown character, costume, and rôle, ranging from the doleful tramp and the silly man to the gay harlequin. Putty added gives a peaked skull, a bulbous nose; paint enlarges the mouth, the eyebrows in diverse ways; the rag-bag supplies most of the costumes. Each has his own repertoire of stunts and gags; is constantly improvising new ones. Some make a speciality of guying the audience—some guy themselves. These photographs introduce some of the Big Top's star clowns in their make-up.

THE LITERARY LOUNGER.

By L. P. HARTLEY.

As the season of peace and goodwill approaches one looks for some sign of them, if not in the modern world then in that mirror of the world's estate, the modern novel. Not very hopefully, perhaps, because every novelist is sensitive to the spirit of the age and must remember, also, that whereas war and ill-will are " news," peace and goodwill are not.

"WESTWOOD, OR THE GENTLE POWERS." By Stella Gibbons.

But surprisingly enough we do not have to look long or far, for here is Miss Stella Gibbons purveying precisely the kind of thing we want. " Westwood, or The Gentle Powers " is, in point of period, a novel of the war: London in the blitz is its scene. Its scene, but not its subject; its subject is the influence exercised over a young schoolmistress by " the gentle powers " of the novel's secondary title.

Margaret Steggles was not in the least a snob, but she had, unknown to herself, a hunger for a certain graciousness of living which she did not find at home or at school or in the company of her best friend, Hilda. Mr. and Mrs. Steggles did not " get on." His wife's nagging tongue drove Mr. Steggles into the public-house and into other arms than hers. Its effect on Margaret was less violent but equally pervasive, and it made her shy with men to be constantly told she was a failure with them. Teaching was an occupation with Margaret, not a vocation; it left her imagination unkindled, nor did she envy her pretty friend Hilda her train of humdrum swains. So that when the accident of picking up a dropped ration-book put her in touch with the famous artist, Alexander Niland, and later with his father-in-law, the still more celebrated playwright, Gerard Challis, she was swept off her feet into a golden daydream.

But it was not these angelic beings themselves (alas, she soon learned, though her heart refused to be convinced, that they were not so angelic as they appeared) that attracted her so much as the atmosphere they created, their *train-de-vie*, their mastery of the art of living—all these intangibles being summed up in Westwood, Mr. Challis's stately home on the heights of North London.

Margaret entered through the side-door, as it were; she helped with the children and made friends with the staff, the formidable Grantey and the warm-hearted, moody Zita. Gradually she came to be accepted by the family with affectionate patronage as an institution: " Struggles " could be relied on in any emergency. She never achieved with them the intimacy that her friend Hilda, all unknown to her, enjoyed with the romantic philanderer " Marcus " (alias Gerard Challis). This clandestine friendship gives the story its strongest scene, and Margaret's infatuation for Westwood its shrewdest blow. After that, even she could not pretend Mr. Challis was a hero. Yet his house had done something for her that no conviction of his own hollowness could undo: the complex of emotions it aroused—its beauty, its commerce with the arts, its easy friendliness, its broad, generous, confident outlook, were an inheritance that nothing could destroy.

Even Miss Stella Gibbons's acute sense of the ridiculous—and she cannot set up the most modest idol without plastering it with arrows—cannot debunk what Westwood stands for. Superficially, Margaret leads a very dull life, without emotional relationships, without intimate friends, put upon by everyone—including Miss Gibbons. But the Gentle Powers, surviving the blitz, take the sting out of all this, turning an attitude of denial and endurance into one of acceptance and enjoyment. It is all a question (Miss Gibbons seems to say) of learning to prefer butter to guns. This is an enchanting book.

Mrs. Honor Croome, author of " The Faithless Mirror," reviewed on this page, is a grand-niece of the late C. P. Scott, famous editor of the " Manchester Guardian." She was a student at the London School of Economics, on which subject she has written a standard work. She was evacuated to America with her young family in the early days of the war, and there turned her attention to writing fiction, her first novel, " O Western Wind," appearing in 1943. She is the mother of five children.

Copyright Portrait by Karsh of Ottawa.

"THE FAITHLESS MIRROR." By Honor Croome.

To say that an equally Christian and Christmas spirit presides over " The Faithless Mirror " would be going too far; yet in a sense Mrs. Croome's theme is the gradual uprooting of hostile and destructive feelings and their replacement by understanding and sympathy and love. Not entirely, or even mainly, by the agency of the Gentle Powers, for these, in wartime Ottawa, were slightly submerged. There, toughness held the field; and Hallie, choosing between two suitors, had to weigh Middle-European vigour against Gloucestershire gentlemanliness.

Ottawa was not more immune from snobbery than any other city: it had its Lovely Families, but they do not seem to have had much notion of *douceur de vivre*. Hallie, however, was tender-minded, not tough. She was a Constant Nymph, and the object of her solicitude was her brother, Blake. Her affection for him was mixed with a strong sense of guilt; she had persuaded herself that it was owing to her carelessness that he sustained the injury to his hand which ruined his career. (He was to have been a professional pianist.) That was not Blake's only grievance against life. He had another, inherited from his father, against his mother's relations, and yet another against a woman who had been a great deal but not enough to him. He was a misfit, everything he touched went wrong; and now he had crowned his folly by marrying a sour, jealous woman much older than himself.

Hallie was the first object of Muriel's jealousy. Guardianship of Blake had become a habit with her which she could not immediately shake off. Made to realise she was not wanted in her brother's house, she struck up a friendship with Adam Mikoscz, a good fellow but a rough diamond and sensitive about his origins. Playing the heavy brother, Blake, prompted by Muriel, broke up the friendship. After a cruel, bitter parting which scarred them both, Hallie found another sympathiser, English and presentable this time. . . . But meanwhile Muriel and Blake, with the intervention of a third party, had been getting on each other's nerves to such a degree that something more serious than hysteria seemed imminent. Hallie rushed to the rescue.

In the succeeding scenes there is a great deal of plain speaking, and in the process all the characters begin to realise their mistakes, which come, Mrs. Croome suggests, rather from blindness than from more serious defects of nature—from not recognising facts, from trying to bolster up unreal situations, from not sufficiently respecting each other's freedom.

Hard feelings are forgotten in the general *détente*; happiness is almost assured for Hallie, and made possible, perhaps, for all the characters. To bring this about Mrs. Croome has had to strain probability a little, not only in the incidents but also, I think, in making Blake and Muriel so remarkably articulate about themselves. People may think such things but they don't, usually, say them. Direct presentation is perhaps her weakest weapon in an armoury of strong ones. In comment, analysis, and description, in all the *oratio obliqua* of writing, she is first-rate.

"MAQUISARD: A CHRISTMAS TALE." By Albert J. Guerard.

Defined by its author as " a Christmas tale, this novel opens on the eve of the last Christmas of the war, when the desperate heroes of the French Resistance Movement are being disbanded preparatory to enlistment in the Regular Army. One and all, they dread the prospect. " As individuals, they were not prepared . . . too many years of working in small teams—setting fire to farms, blowing up bridges, derailing trains—had prepared them for nothing else." Th American member of the unit feels th as much as any of them. Moreover, th have learned to hate, and to some exten are still ruled by hatred: particularly Jea whose wife, herself a Maquisard, has bee tortured and killed by the Nazis, and whos other woman friend is the wife of a collaborator. It is a far cry from thes tormented minds to the Christmas spirit: and there is a further obstacle in the way Von Rundstedt's counter-attack has been launched, and Paris looks to be once mor in danger.

It is Jean's four children, piloted by their American protector, who put things right—such is his joy at seeing them after so many years. Indeed, before the story is over he has provided them with a stepmother. Perhaps the pieces fall into position a little too neatly at the end, but who cares? All that matters is that these brave men should find in civilian life some emotional substitute for the unnatural rigours of the past years. Mr. Albert Guerard describes them with knowledge and sympathy but without making light of the problem of their re-education as ordinary citizens.

"THE HOLLOW." By Agatha Christie.

A new Agatha Christie just before Christmas is a godsend to harassed present-hunters; and whoever gives or receives a copy of " The Hollow " will have every reason to feel satisfied. Mrs. Christie is a romantic—her characters, for good or ill, are all forms of giant height—but she is a realist too, and her vision is unclouded by cynicism or sentimentality. Her productiveness is almost unbelievable, but the amazingly high quality of her work does not suffer in consequence; certainly no writer of detective-stories has given the public a thirty-ninth book comparable in excellence to " The Hollow." At one period Mrs. Christie allowed a touch of the meretricious to mar her work, but latterly she has triumphantly freed herself from this. Her tricks still savour a little of sharp practice—unless that is merely the complaint of a reader whom she has hoodwinked once again!

BOOKS REVIEWED.

Westwood, or The Gentle Powers. By Stella Gibbons. (*Longmans; 10s. 6d.*)
The Faithless Mirror. By Honor Croome. (*Christophers; 8s. 6d.*)
Maquisard: A Christmas Tale. By Albert J. Guerard. (*Longmans; 7s. 6d.*)
The Hollow. By Agatha Christie. (*Collins; 8s. 6d.*)

CHRISTMAS CRACKS.

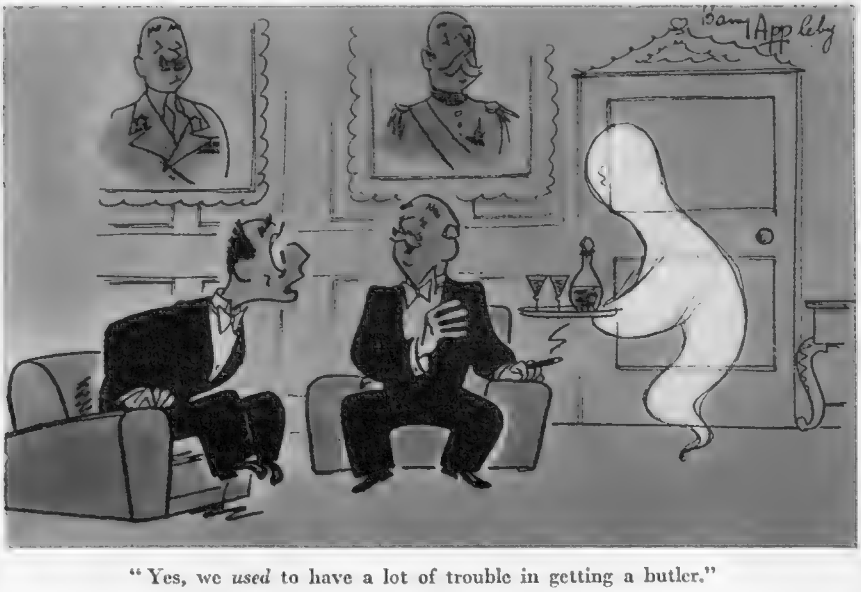
Drawn by Barry Appleby.

"A sleigh drawn by reindeer has crashed into some chimney-pots."

"Yes, he always gets one of those just before Christmas."

"The Managing Director will see you immediately, Sir."

"I expect you 're feeling rather disillusioned."



"Yes, we *used* to have a lot of trouble in getting a butler."

TALES WITH A STING

THE ADMIRAL WALKED HOME.*

By NORAH BURKE.

WHEN Bridget was pulling level to pass the car in front of her, she suddenly saw that the driver was her ex-husband, whom she hadn't met since the divorce. She passed him with eyes straight ahead.

Remembering, all in a moment, his charm and luck and unselfishness, the witty things he used to say—outrageous, yet disarmingly funny. But remembering also his incorrigible flirting. Theirs had been a war marriage, a war divorce. His fault, and though he had begged her not to divorce him, it had all been more than she could bear, and she went through with it. That was maybe the only bit of bad luck in his life. Admiral Bill they called him in the Navy, sometimes Lucky Bill. A dashing sailor.

She began driving faster and faster, as if to leave behind not only Bill, but all the pangs of loss and loneliness as well. Those pangs were telling now, specially with Christmas coming up on her, and she 'd got to spend it alone. Going to be a real old English Christmas, too—rain, mud, greasy roads.

Suddenly there was a toot and Bill shot past her, hooting, with his head turned to look at her. Indeed, he was so anxious to see if she had recognised him that he omitted to register the presence of anyone else on the road.

" Look out ! " Bridget heard herself shout. About as useful as the warnings children call to Peter Pan on the stage.

He caught the wing of the lorry coming towards him, performed a graceful waltzing skid with his partner, and piled up against a telegraph-pole. It took all Bridget's brakes not to join in the fun.

She jumped out to see if anyone were hurt. Anyone.

She needn't have worried about Lucky Bill. He stepped from the wreckage, shaking glass from his hair. A stocky man, with curly head and merry eyes, much too nice to be handsome.

" You—you——" frothed the lorry driver.

" Sorry. I know. Entirely my fault. There 's my name and number."

It 's no fun if an opponent gives in. " Look what you done to me bus ! "

" That 's nothing. If you want to see what I can do to a car, take a glance at that one."

Bridget said clearly. " If you two 'll please stop arguing and get out of the way, I 'd like to drive on."

They arranged about informing the police, then the lorry driver rumbled back to his seat. With a craunch of gears and the rip of metal disengaging, he began to move. There was nothing wrong with him but a buckled wing.

Bill looked at Bridget. Bridget looked at the lorry. She was a pinky-brown girl : brown hair, brown eyes, a sunny pink skin. She was standing with her hands clasped behind her, but inside the fur coat, so that the nice lines of her new suit could be appreciated. It was of turquoise-green tweed, and had cost eighteen coupons and thirty guineas. The fur coat was dark brown—South American skunk—and the large felt hat was dark brown, too. At her throat, just under her chin, was a triangle of pale rust-pink shirt with a diamond in it. *And* there were British nylons—believe it or not, British.

Bill put up one eyebrow. She 'd sort of forgotten that trick of his, and it winded her. " You wouldn't, I suppose," he suggested silkily, " give me a lift ? "

" No. Where to ? "

" The next garage. Get them to collect the wreck."

" Very well. Where are you going ? "

" I was on my way to stay with friends for Christmas," he answered. " I shall have to ring up and get them to fetch me."

" I suppose it 's all right leaving your car ? " It was way up on the grass.

" I have immobilised it," he replied proudly.

He got into her two-seater. " I don't usually accept lifts from strangers," he assured her primly as he did so. " I hope I shan't have to get out and walk."

" The Admiral walked home," she commented. Her tone was straight out of the frig., but lest it sounded too friendly a rejoinder, she went on with " I 'm afraid we 're not going to get snow for Christmas."

" Feels as if it 's already here ! Cigarette ? "

" No, thanks."

" Given up smoking ? "

" No." She arranged her fur so as not to sit on it. She arranged the back pleats of her skirt underneath her. " When I used to give lifts to Highlanders," she said, " I enjoyed watching men sit down carefully so 's not to spoil the pleats of their skirts."

"Hundreds of Highlanders, I suppose."

" No. Just one at a time."

" Did you know many Americans, Biddy ? "

" No. Why ? "

" Silk stockings," he said.

She was not amused. It caused a silence.

The fretwork of winter hedges raced past them, laced with thousands of lying scarlet berries that had promised snow. Instead it was going to be a gentle English Christmas, soft as mist.

Very quietly, " Are you married ? " he asked.

" No."

" Neither," he said, " am I."

" Indeed. I 'm surprised. What happened to all of them, then ? Petra, for instance ? And Joyce ? And the White Job ? "

" Petra, dear, you were right, was an absolute rattlesnake ; and as for Joyce, I refuse to be out alone with

" She jumped out to see if anyone were hurt."

**All the characters and incidents in this story are imaginary.*

that woman after ten o'clock at night. Talk about walking home. Phew!"

"The White woman, then? Mink and violets and all."

"*M'm—m'm*——" he agreed lusciously.

"Why the something didn't you marry her, then?"

"I was still hoping for you."

"There must be any number of women who would become your wife to-morrow," she pointed out. "You'd better take your pick and settle down."

"Which one would you suggest?"

"In present domestic circumstances, I advise the best cook you can get. Preferably one without a career, who loves everything to do with the house. Bettine, for instance."

"No sex appeal."

She inquired icily, "Do you look for that in the home?"

"I used to get it, anyway. No, not Bettine."

"Marry money, then. Elaine."

"I once read that in China the wife often chooses her husband's concubines. She selects those who will be useful to her in running the establishment and keeping the husband happy."

"Look," she said frostily. "Here's a garage."

"Not there," he objected. "Can't. I've quarrelled with the management."

They drove on. One or two pubs drifted past.

"I can cook much better than you can."

"Will you have a drink with me, Biddy?"

"No, thank you."

"Given up drinking?"

"No." And she said, "Look, there's a call-box. You could ring up a garage and your friends from there."

He looked in it. He came back. "It's marked 'Out of order,'" he said ingeniously. "Where are you living now?" as he got in again.

"I've got a cottage on Orchard Hill. I was extraordinarily lucky. Oil-lamps. A pump in the yard. Every modern inconvenience."

"Including a 'phone?"

"Well, marvellous to relate, it has actually got a 'phone."

"Then I could ring up from there!" he triumphed.

"Look, here's another garage."

"Not that one, sweet. It's only a filling station."

They drove on.

"What," she asked, "is wrong with that garage over there, then? The one with orange pumps."

"Give me one minute to think and I'll tell you."

She drew up by the orange pumps. "Here you are," she said firmly, much admiring her coolness. It felt very nice to have something to be so angry about.

A mechanic approached. "Yes, Sir?"

"Have you got a breakdown lorry?"

"Yes, Sir. But I'm afraid it's out on a job."

"Is it? Good. I didn't want it." They drove on.

"Get this straight," said Bridget. "We're not going on like this all day."

"No," he agreed, and he looked at her, "we're not."

The town through which they were passing was decorated for Christmas. The shop windows, that is. All prettily frosted with tinsel. There were children going home with armfuls of holly and laurel. It was such beautiful Christmas weather, too—no frost, no snow, the most beautiful Christmas that fuel rationing has yet seen.

"Look," said Bill. "It's Christmas, darling. Time to forgive and forget and be friends and everything."

"You should have thought of that two years ago."

"Please forgive me, Biddy."

"Oh, I forgive you, of course," with exquisite indifference.

"And take me back?"

"What exactly are your intentions?" she demanded.

"Very dishonourable."

"It's time you learnt to think of others besides yourself," she scolded, knowing perfectly well how unfair she was being, for if anyone was unselfish, it was Bill. He'd give away everything he'd got.

"We could get married again," he dreamed. "It'll be fun to marry the same person twice. You'll see."

"Fun?"

"Wasn't it fun? I seem to remember——"

"I don't!" But she did.

"What will you wear for your second wedding?"

"I don't know. It'll be nothing to do with you, anyway."

"Haven't you missed me, Biddy?" She wouldn't answer.

He went on, "You'd find me useful around the place. I could chop wood and tote water. Cook, too. You know I can cook much better than you can."

She made a disbelieving noise.

"I can!" he insisted. "Why, you can't even boil water without burning it."

But she wouldn't play. Very soon now they would come to a garage or another call-box, or something with which he could find nothing wrong, and it would all be over. Even Christmas hadn't stirred her. He sat there silent, looking so crestfallen that she didn't dare look at him twice. Because she was not—she was *not* going to go through all that again, no matter if he did make her blood beat ten times faster. It hurt like hell to be jealous, and he would make her jealous, just as he had done before. Look at the way he'd been talking to her now, for instance. Exciting, but he couldn't help doing it to every woman from eight to eighty. He was a crashing success with old ladies: he loved all old people, for the matter of that. But it was the young ones she minded.

He drew a long breath. "Look, that was war. People don't behave the same way in peace. Besides, I'm older. I would give you my word of honour——"

He looked at her sideways. If only she wouldn't sit there so straight and serious, with rods in her eyes. If only he could make her laugh, the thing would be done. If only she would laugh.

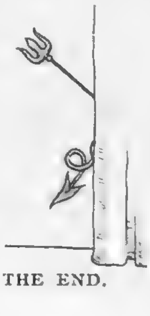
"Couldn't we patch it up, Biddy? Christmas and that. Please."

Her heart was behaving like a grasshopper, but "There's no need for you to regret our divorce," she retorted. "You could replace me to-morrow. A man can always get a woman, but a woman can't always get a man. You're lucky."

"Lucky!" he said. "I'm so lucky that if I were Santa Claus and my reindeer stalled at 5000 feet there'd be a feather-bed waiting for me, with a blonde in it."

She laughed. It was done. It was done.

But the Admiral didn't walk home.



THE END.

CITY NOTES.

FINANCE IN A FIRST-CLASS CARRIAGE.

"IT has paid for the turkey—and for the Christmas pudding as well," the Jobber was saying. "Thanks to the stagging operations, I didn't have to cash any of my bloated capital profits after all."

The Broker said that, talking of stags, he 'd thought everyone nowadays knew what *they* were. But yesterday a lady client wrote and asked him to buy her a stag, as she understood that several of her friends were doing very well out of these Stock Exchange creatures.

"How did you answer ?" queried the Merchant. "I 'm interested, because I find it none too easy to define your Stock Exchange slang when I 'm asked, especially by ladies."

"Stag is easy enough. He, or she, is simply one who applies for stocks and shares of a new issue, hoping to get an allotment that can be sold at a profit—the sooner the better."

"And the stags have been enjoying a jolly good time just lately," said the Engineer. "I 've pulled out a few plums myself. Very acceptable for Christmas expenses, as our friend here evidently found."

"You cannot feel certain of selling at a premium," the Banker needlessly reminded them. "And don't you require a fair amount of capital if you embark on a large scale upon stagging ?"

"You want a certain amount of capital, of course, and, if you are making a business of it, a collection of rubber stamps, so that you can apply under different names at various addresses——"

The Merchant laughed. "You don't mean to say," he protested, "that anybody goes to all this trouble nowadays ? I know they used to, in the old days ; but would it pay at the present time, do you think ?"

The Broker shrugged his shoulders. "Possibly not," he replied. "I suppose most people are satisfied to stag in their own name, and to a more moderate extent than before the war. There 's always the risk of biting off more than can be conveniently digested, and of having to sell at a loss instead of a profit."

"We are lucky, though," the City Editor observed, "in having had a spate of pretty good things of late. Very few stumers amongst them. As serious investments, the majority won't hurt keeping, even by an inveterate stag."

"The inveterate stag, as you call him, wants to nip out at once. He is as impatient as a bear is fidgety, and until he and his shares are out of the way, the market in those particular shares is restrained by them."

"I believe those James Nelson Ordinary are worth having," the Broker remarked. "There is plenty of scope for a business like rayon cloths production, and the shares appeal to a pretty wide circle. I like them, don't you ?" he appealed to the Merchant.

"Yes, I think you 're on a good wicket with them. And, if you care to change the bowling, how about Town Tailors, the 'Weaver to Wearer' company that Rothschilds sponsored ?"

"Quite good for future reference, I should say. Looked to me rather expensive when they came out. I know they were heavily over-subscribed——"

"Those wicked stags !"

"Think so ? You can't tell, really. Anyway, they didn't see much of a profit at the start. Too many other things to compete with, I guess. And clients don't feel very commercial with Christmas at hand and window-dressing to be had in remembrance."

"Do the public trouble any longer to pile up a big balance at their bankers on New Year's Eve ? I thought that old tradition of financial window-dressing had died out."

"By no means," the Banker affirmed. "I should say that most of our customers endeavour to fortify their accounts to the best of their ability on December 31st. I don't think the times have greatly changed in that respect."

"As they have in others." And the Broker recalled the Christmas season as it was wont to be in the Stock Exchange. "Elaborate decorations in the Consol Market, coloured papers over the electric lights, mad balloon-acy, turkey raffles, Charity let loose, top hats flying about—— Well, well," and he sighed heavily.

"However, the House is to be closed on Boxing Day."

"It always is closed," said the City Editor. "Everyone knows that."

"Craving your pardon, Sir," the Broker contradicted him, "the House was open on Boxing Day, December 26th, 1941. Oh, yes, it was," he answered the Jobber's surprised exclamation. "Go and look up our Official List if you don't believe me. It was a Friday."

"I suppose you 're right. Glad it isn't going to be open this year. Now that we have started fortnightly accounts for the first time in more than seven years, it 's just as well to get three days off, if only to give office-staffs a bit of a break."

"What are we going to tell folks to buy for the new go ? Is the shipping boom over ?"

"I 'm not turning my clients out of their Cunards," said the Broker. "I may be quite wrong, but I still think Cunards will reach fifty shillings."

"Then O.S.N. ought to keep them company, eh ?"

"They have. Worst of it is that O.S.N. are not quoted in any of our Stock Exchange lists. If they were, we should see a lot more business in them. The Company pays no dividend. It is a Realisation concern, holding Cunard-White Star shares. We deal in the 'B,' which are cheap in comparison with Cunards. I put the break-up value 10s. higher than to-day's price. And Furness Withy deserve your attention, if you 'll excuse a descent into journalese," and the Broker pointedly looked out of the window.

"Journalese !" sniffed the City Editor, walking into it. "We do indicate the shares that readers are likely to benefit from by putting their money into. They have to send the orders to their brokers, so we do a good turn to the Stock Exchange as well as to our readers."

"We appreciate that, of course," the Jobber acknowledged. "But why don't you take the trouble to inquire whether the shares you so confidently recommend can be bought ?"

"*Ne comprends.* You mean—— ?"

"I mean," explained the Broker, "that you take quite a lot of trouble to show that certain things are good to buy, and then, when clients send orders in them, the broker has to write back and say the market are only buyers and that the shares are not offered."

"Which happens pretty often in these latter days," the Jobber confirmed.

"But a journalist cannot help that," the City Editor declared. "It 's sure to occur sometimes. He digs out what he thinks is a good thing, and surely he is justified in passing on the information to his readers."

"My point," said the Broker, "and speaking for a good many of us, is that the chap who recommends any stock or share, should make certain in advance that it can be bought. Otherwise, he only annoys the reader and irritates the Stock Exchange member, broker and jobber alike."

"Seems to me you want me to keep to things in which there 's a free market. One can't be for ever writing about General Electrics and Harrods and Coats and Dunlops and Imperial Tobacco and Austin Motors and your blessed shipping shares."

"You might do a good deal worse than with those you 've mentioned," remarked the Merchant. "Not but what there are dozens of others——"

"Make it scores," the Broker interposed. "All I 'm asking is that when you tell people to buy, you should ascertain that there 's a supply available to meet any demand you may create. O.K. ?"

"Now, for a good share," said the Merchant, "try O.K. Bazaars ; and Greatermans is another. The King and Queen are going to South Africa very soon, and their visit will be a fine thing for all these South African stores companies. . . . Oh, here we are."

The Engineer tapped the Broker on the arm as they alighted. "You might ring me up with the price of Greatermans," he said quietly. "I generally buy the wife a few shares at Christmas-time. I 'll be in my office all the morning. Bye-bye."

"I *will* pay my income tax . . . I *won't* pay my income tax . . . I *will* pay my income tax . . ."

DRAWN BY PITTS.

Peter French

BLOUSES & SKIRTS

IN

Royal Seal

MATERIALS

FRENCH SPORTSWEAR LTD. (wholesale), 29, BRUTON ST., LONDON, W.1

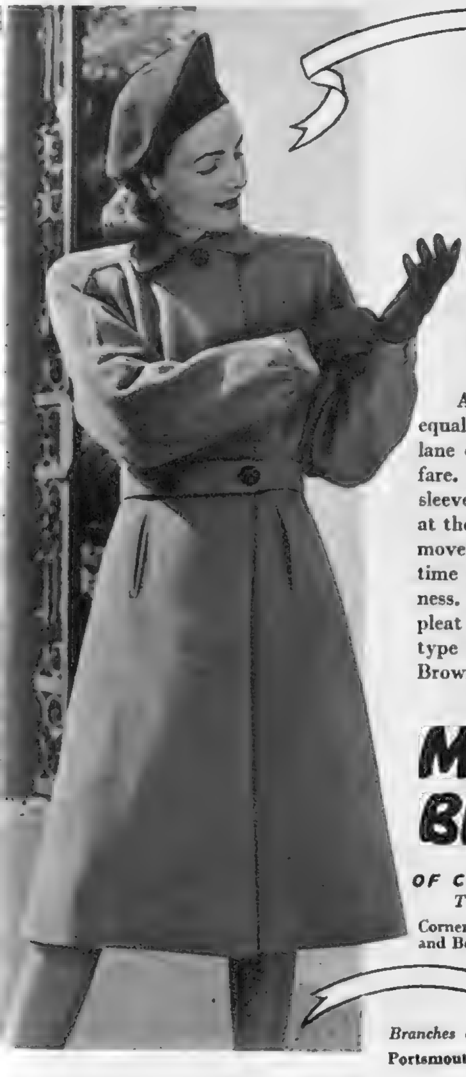
Thirty
minutes
well-spent

Friendly enemy of heavy hips . . . Elizabeth Arden's giant roller. It rolls away inches where they are unwelcome so gently you actually enjoy it. Brief treatments of one half hour each are sufficient for diminishing purposes.

For an appointment telephone Mayfair 8211

Elizabeth Arden

NEW YORK 25 OLD BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1. PARIS



For Town and Country

A practical walking coat, equally at home in a country lane or on a busy thoroughfare. The fancy Dolman sleeves and the blouse effect at the back, give freedom of movement and at the same time add a touch of dressiness. Has a centre inverted pleat at the back. Camel-type cloth in Nigger, Navy, Brown, Tan and Camel shade. £19.10.9

MOSS BROS

OF COVENT GARDEN
Temple Bar 4477
Corner of King St.
and Bedford St., W.C.2

Branches at : Bournemouth, Manchester, Portsmouth, Bristol, Camberley, Aldershot.

THE AUSTIN MOTOR CO., LTD • LONGBRIDGE • BIRMINGHAM

WHITE CHRISTMAS

WHETHER IT COMES IN SNOW OR SILK, WHITE IS THE PERFECT FOIL FOR COLOURFUL FESTIVITIES

Left: White draped evening gown, statuesque as a Grecian figure. A Simon Massey model from Harrods.

Below: White crêpe tunic, sequin embroidered, with a slim black skirt. Peter Robinson.

LIBERTY'S
OF
REGENT STREET

RATHER one ought to say Liberty's of England. Because in no other country is there a shop with such queer and beautiful individuality.

Liberty's was conceived by the genius of one man, the late Sir Arthur Liberty, and it has never lost the character that he gave it. Instead, its fame has gone round the world, and Liberty's has become bracketed with the Tower of London, the Tate Gallery, Buckingham Palace, as a place that must be visited.

This could only be possible for a shop that had not only the genius of presentation but the genius of providing everything useful and beautiful at the lowest competitive prices.

If you wish to spend wisely,
Liberty's are at your service.

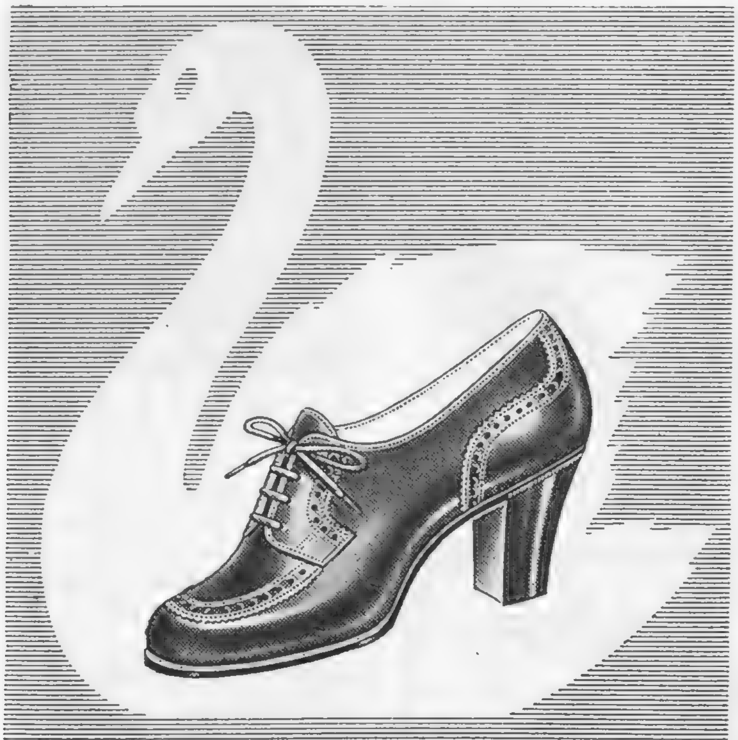
LIBERTY'S

Rings by

Through the ages the art of ring making has called for the exercise of the greatest skill on the part of the craftsman. The modern setting of precious stones in platinum may not compare in elaboration with the chased hoops of Benvenuto Cellini, but it expresses the same eternal symbolism.

THE GOLDSMITHS & SILVERSMITHS COMPANY LTD
112 REGENT STREET
LONDON, W.1

ONLY ONE ADDRESS · TELEPHONE: REGENT 3021



Tailored model in brown calf from the Swan shoe range. Swan shoes are fashioned with flair and produced with pride by master craftsmen. They are sponsored by leading shoe shops and drapery stores throughout the United Kingdom; but for the time being, supplies are necessarily limited.

SWAN SHOES

For Men's Shoes by Crockett & Jones, Northampton, ask for the 'Health' brand

CVS—127A

GIVE A *Beauty* TOKEN THIS CHRISTMAS

TOKEN A: *10/6—special DEEP cleansing treatment which includes light manipulation, face massage and make-up.*

TOKEN B: *£1.1.0—full manipulative treatment—muscle manipulation, DEEP cleansing, feeding massage, pulsating machine, mask and make-up.*

NAME____________________

ADDRESS____________________

____________________ S.1

Attach this advertisement to your cheque or postal order, and the beautifully designed Anne French Gift Token for the above beauty treatment at the Bond Street Salon will be posted to you.

Anne French
BEAUTY SALON
2-5 OLD BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1

From Teen-Age to Maturity

Forty-two

—the age when women having reached the Summer-time of life can still be envied for that figure line moulded beautifully by . . .

THE Gossard LINE OF BEAUTY

for individual tailoring... personal attention

Bernard Weatherill Ltd

55 CONDUIT STREET, LONDON, W.1

11 Bennett's Hill, Birmingham *47 High Street, Aldershot*

Look forward to the return of

'Golden Shred'

The World's Best Marmalade

JAMES ROBERTSON & SONS (P.M.) LTD.
London, Paisley, Manchester, Bristol.

It's worth while trying to get

—then your suit will be made of Scotland's hardest wearing cloth

S.P 1e

Wearra MULTIPLE FITTING SHOES

for Men and their Sons

The Wearra range provides the FORMULA FOR FITTING feet correctly.

Three widths to each size and half-size.

H.L. SHORTLAND
Master Shoemaker and Designer of the Wearra Shoe

MAD APPLE · VINTAGE
VICTORIAN ROSE
DARK FIRE · REGENCY
CLOVER · FIREWEED
HEART BREAK
GINGER TEA · PALE

WHICH COLOUR WILL YOU HAVE?

Back again, the lovely Peggy Sage nail polishes, in a whirl of lovely names and adorable shades. Brilliant favourites of pre-war—and new, fascinating additions to the Peggy Sage collection. Peggy Sage is always striving for improved quality, but materials are still in short supply. In the meantime, always in the lead, she offers the finest possible polish under present conditions.

Peggy Sage

FINGER-TIP SPECIALIST

—SALONS—
LONDON: 130 NEW BOND ST., W.1
(Corner of Grosvenor St.) Phone: MAYFAIR 0396
NEW YORK: 50 EAST 57th STREET
PARIS: 7 PLACE VENDOME

You flatter yourself!

Streamline your waistline in this new GOR-RAY non-austerity skirt. Eight pleats cleverly cut to put the accent on slenderness. It's not expensive and the material is good. The best shops everywhere stock it, but be sure to look for the genuine GOR-RAY label

GOR-RAY Registered

Gor-ray Ltd 107 New Bond Street, W 1

"*Drene* Shampoo finds hidden lustre in my hair" says *Deborah Kerr*

NO WONDER SO MANY women use Drene Shampoo! Like the stars of Stage and Screen, they have discovered how Drene gives hair new and fascinating lustre. These exciting highlights can be yours too, the first time *you* use Drene. Hair becomes easy to set right after the shampoo . . . looks more glamorous than ever before. 7½d. and 1/10½d. and an extra large Family Size that will save you money . . . ask your chemist or hairdresser.

Famous Star of The Archers' film "Black Narcissus"

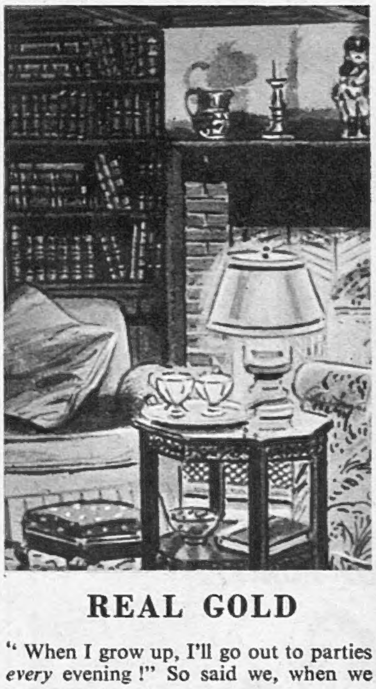
drene

THE SHAMPOO OF THE STARS

THOMAS HEDLEY AND COMPANY LIMITED, NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE

Nivea Creme penetrates deep into the tissues beneath the skin surface. It replaces the natural health and beauty elements that the skin continually loses through washing, sun and wind. In the blue and white tin, 2/-. (3)

Herts Pharmaceuticals Ltd., Welwyn Garden City



REAL GOLD

"When I grow up, I'll go out to parties *every* evening!" So said we, when we were very young.

But most of us, as we grow older, learn to distinguish the tinsel from the gold. We find that a chair by our own fireside is a remarkably comfortable place. Here we can lean back, and relax. Here we can talk, and think, and dream . . .

And many of us, as bedtime approaches, like to indulge in the soothing nourishment that Horlicks provides. We like the comfort it brings to frayed nerves, the assurance of sound sleep, the promise of new energy for tomorrow.

Available supplies of Horlicks are being shared out as fairly as possible.

HORLICKS

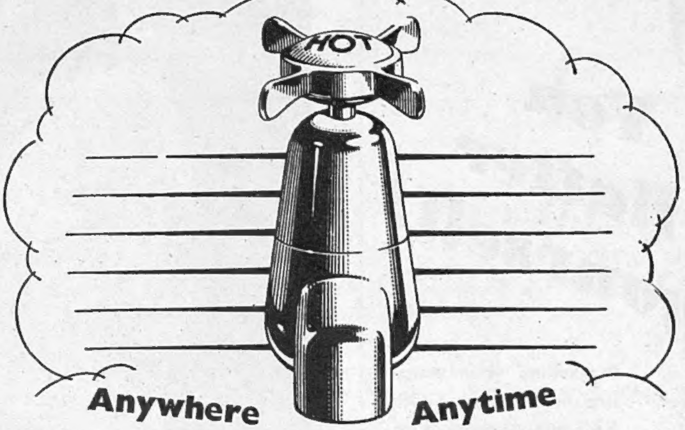
All complexions need protection when exposed to the elements, that is why " Larola " is so useful to travellers and open-air lovers. Guards skin from harmful effects of sun or wind, permits *suntan without sunburn.* Applied *after* over-exposure "Larola" soothes and restores charm to rough, red, sore skin and counteracts effects of insect bites and stings.

Write for free booklet containing valuable and interesting information regarding the care of skin.

"Larola"

From all chemists and stores 2/8½ and 4/6 per bottle including Purchase Tax.

M. BEETHAM & SON, CHELTENHAM



How smoothly the troubles and problems of this world sort themselves out under the influence of a hot bath. How quickly constant hot water tames the bogey of washing up. A Creda Water Heater will never fail you. It gives you hot water for every purpose at any temperature you choose whenever you want it—all for a few pence a day! Models to suit every size of family and every type of plumbing system.

AS HOT AS YOU LIKE

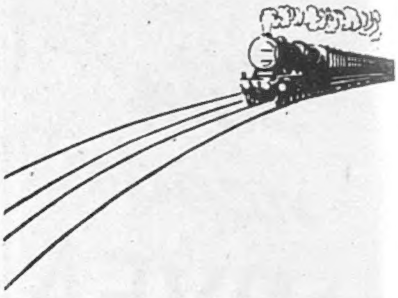
Creda

Also Creda Electric Fires, Irons, Kettles, Cookers and Wash Boilers

THE BEST AT EVERY POINT

SIMPLEX ELECTRIC CO. LTD. OLDBURY, BIRMINGHAM

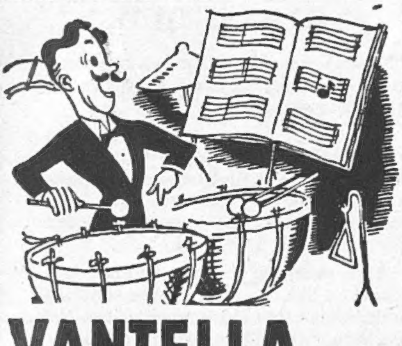
Coming soon—



AERTEX

OP.N3

WAIT FOR IT!



VANTELLA SHIRTS
with "VAN HEUSEN" REGD.
COLLARS TO MATCH

OP-N3

THREE REASONS FOR BEAUTY

Oatine Night Cream cleanses and revives the skin. Oatine Snow is a gossamer day cream for greasy skins. Oatine Powder Base —tinted to match your powder — is the ideal base for day-long make-up perfection.

Beauty Oatine Creams

CVS—29

When only the best will do!

SLIMMA

SKIRTS · SLACKS

SLIMMA WEAR LTD. (Wholesale), 25, BRUTON STREET, LONDON, W.1

From the Chilprufe Album

This is DAPHNE

Daphne, nearing five, has a grown-up sister who last term brought home some 'botany specimens.' So Daphne, ever helpful, may be seen most days dredging the stream in the big meadow for fresh exhibits. Farmer frequently remarks that it's a wonder she " doesn't catch her death."

But Daphne is hardy—and Daphne has worn Chilprufe from birth. It was the pearl-white loveliness of this beautifully made underwear that first caught mother's eye. It is the unfailing protection of its finest Pure Wool that won her unswerving allegiance.

Chilprufe Regd.

for CHILDREN

Also CHILPRUFE Dresses, Rompers, Cardigans, Buster Suits for toddlers, Shoes for Babies, Pram Toys and Man-Tailored Coats for Children.

Supplied only through Chilprufe Agents.

CHILPRUFE LIMITED LEICESTER

CHILPRUFE IS PURE WOOL MADE PERFECT

What will happen next?

" . . . . . . don't cry, Joan, you've only grazed her . . . . What will happen next, I wonder? Did someone say a schoolteacher leads a quiet life? They ought to be in my shoes!"

There's quite a lot to be said for being in this busy schoolteacher's shoes. They're Arch Preserver, her unfailing choice because they supply the correct answer to footstrain.

★ The famous comfort features do the trick.

★ *Steel arch bridge for firm support.*
★ *Individually placed metatarsal pad for comfort.*
★ *Perfectly flat innersole for comfort-plus.*

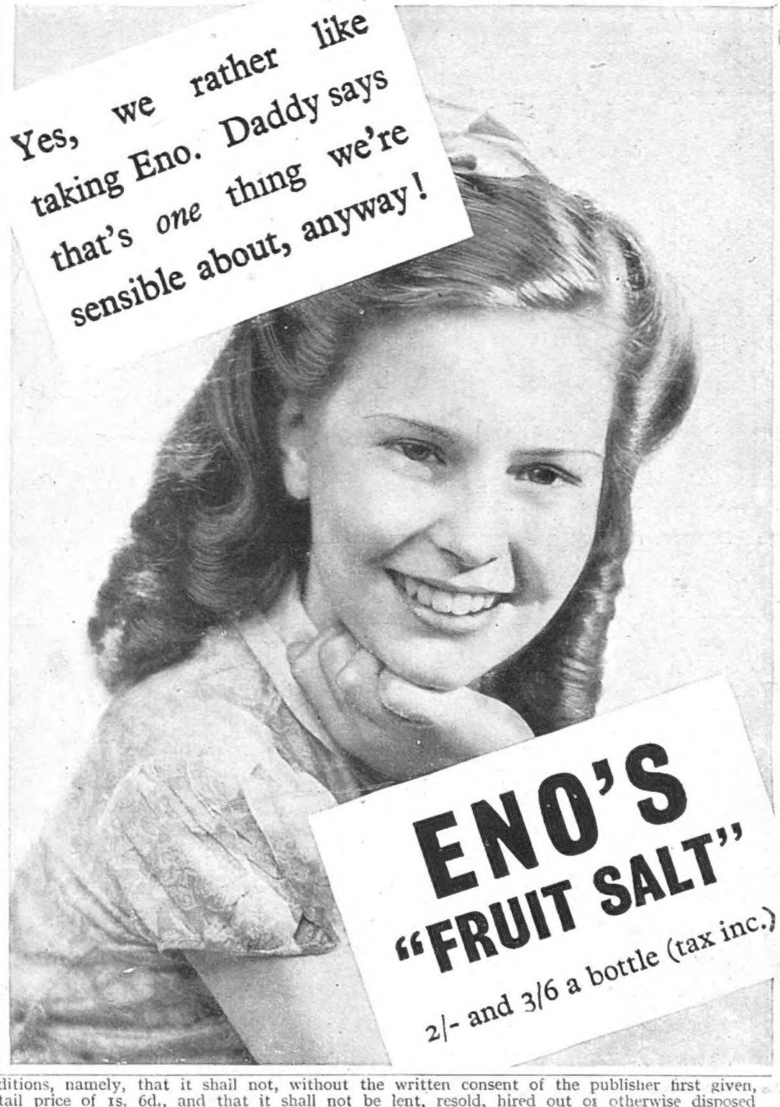
SELBERITE ARCH PRESERVER SHOES

17-18 OLD BOND STREET, LONDON, W.1

In American sizes and a wide range of fittings

Your Personal Fitting can be arranged at appointed Selberite Arch Preserver Agents and at Branches of MANFIELD & SONS.

AP/4/2



CONDITIONS OF SALE AND SUPPLY.—This periodical is sold subject to the following conditions, namely, that it shall not, without the written consent of the publisher first given, be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of by way of Trade except at the full retail price of 1s. 6d., and that it shall not be lent, resold, hired out or otherwise disposed of in a mutilated condition or in any unauthorised cover by way of Trade, or affixed to or as part of any publication or advertising, literary or pictorial matter whatsoever.

Lucky Lady...

Ann certainly is a lucky lady . . . for the last seven tiresome years, cleaning and sweeping at least, have never bothered her. Her G.E.C. electric cleaner has always seen her through. No wonder her envious friends are keeping a very sharp look-out for all the good things the G.E.C. are planning to provide in the months to come. Ease, efficiency and comfort with 'everything electrical'—*are* on the way.

G.E.C.

Electrical Appliances for the Home

Advt. of The General Electric Co., Ltd., Magnet House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2

"Poculum Caritatis"

Nowhere, in days of old, was the custom of wassail held in greater honour than in the monasteries.

To greet the New Year, the abbot would first drink to all, then all would drink to the abbot and then they would all pledge each other. And in case you might like to be reminded of the good things of old which — like Schweppes — will be again, here is an ancient recipe for wassail.

"Simmer small quantities of cardamums, cloves, nutmegs, mace, ginger, cinnamon and coriander in a teacupful of water. When done, put the spice to two, four or six bottles of port, sherry or madeira with half a pound of sugar to each bottle. Set on the fire to warm. When warm add the yolk of 12 and the whites of 6 eggs. Stir it up to a fine froth and toss in 12 fine roasted apples. Serve hot."

Schweppes ★ *Table Waters* *famous since 1790*

★ Temporarily giving place to the standard wartime product — but Schweppes will return.

Traditional quality
OLD SCOTCH WHISKY
in original OLD FASHIONED FLASK

Unsurpassed in quality, although restricted in distribution by scarcity of old stocks

WILLIAM GRIGOR & SON
INVERNESS

★ Seat Reservations again !

Seats can now be reserved in advance on certain long-distance express trains from and to the following London termini :—

PADDINGTON
EUSTON · CHARING CROSS
KING'S CROSS · WATERLOO
LIVERPOOL ST. · VICTORIA
(Fee 1/- per seat)

Application should be made at stations concerned in person or by letter (enclosing appropriate fee).

It is regretted that bookings by telephone cannot be accepted at present.

Reservations cannot yet be offered on all the principal expresses but the list will be extended as fast as possible.

Another Popular Facility Restored

GWR ★ LMS LNER ★ SR

There's heaven in a 'Seven'

ABDULLA NO.7

FOR VIRGINIA SMOKERS
20 for 2/8.

Printed in England by The Illustrated London News and Sketch, Ltd., Milford Lane, London, W.C.2, and Published Fortnightly at the Office, Commonwealth House, 1, New Oxford Street, London, W.C.1. Wednesday December 25, 1946. Re-entered as Second-Class Matter, August 15, 1941, at the Post Office at New York (N.Y.), under the Act of March 3, 1879.